MARCH 1951

COMMENTARY

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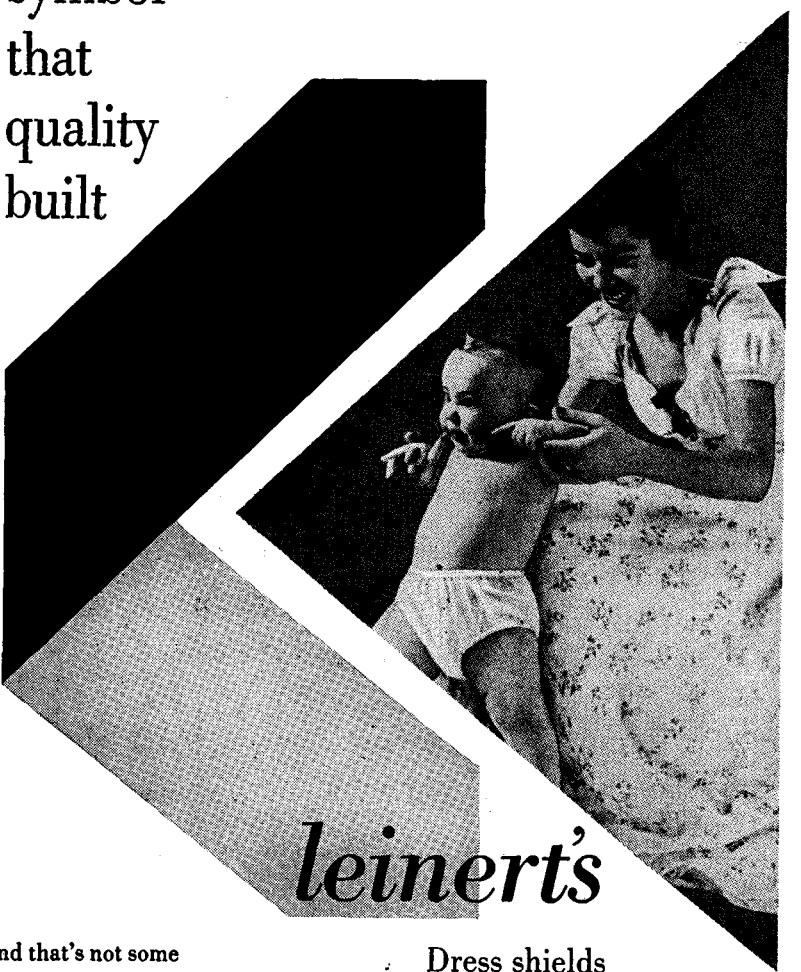

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IN FORTHCOMING ISSUES OF

COMMENTARY

Are We at War with China? *G. F. Hudson*

That China should be fighting against a coalition of nations and yet retain complete immunity for her own territory as if she were at peace is a situation unprecedented in history. Does the UN decision to leave China unmolested represent a sound political policy, or merely a refusal to face the facts? A plain-spoken analysis by an Oxford historian and frequent contributor to the London *Economist*.

Is There a Witch Hunt? *Irwin Ross*

Is the United States suffering from a wave of anti-Communist hysteria? Or does the current excitement merely reflect, as some contend, an unreal "hysteria about hysteria," which sees every attempt to oppose Communist influence as a symptom of impending fascism? The author of *Strategy for Liberals* reviews the facts.

The Arabs of Israel *J. L. Teller*

A crucial test, both moral and political, faces Israel in the treatment of her Arab minority. How can these non-Jewish Israelis be integrated into the community and saved from the fate of second-class citizenship—with all the dangerous tensions that this would create? Mr. Teller discusses the state of Israeli public opinion on this sensitive problem, and what has been done to meet it.

Existentialism and the Modern Crisis *William Barrett*

We have come to think of "philosophy" as one "department of knowledge" among others. Existentialism, Mr. Barrett argues, is something more—no less than an attempt to restore to the word "philosophy" its old meaning as a way of life.

Parable of the Voice *Hermann Broch*

A tale of Rabbi Levi bar Chemjo, by the author of *The Sleepwalkers* and *The Death of Virgil*.

The Birth of Anti-Semitism in America *Oscar Handlin*

The most common view on anti-Semitism in the United States is that it has always existed in this country, but only assumed more ideological forms with the Hitler period. Oscar Handlin, Harvard historian, offers the novel theory that anti-Semitism as we know it arose in the 1890's and was a by-product, not of reactionary forces, but of the American "populist" radical movement.

The Passover Haggadah *Theodor S. Gaster*

A historical and spiritual analysis of the traditional text that forms the center of the Passover ceremony, stressing especially its underlying motivations and meanings.

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COMMENTARY

THE MIDDLE GROUND WHERE NEHRU STANDS

Neither Enough Force Nor Enough Faith

HERRYMON MAURER

IN THE beginning, the issue was sharp, clean. There was invaded South Korea to rescue from the evident danger of Russian-prompted conquest, and there were frightened countries in Asia and Europe alike to reassure. The non-Communist world united with a certain grim enthusiasm to prove that aggression nowhere pays. And then events fell out monstrously. What was sharp became dull, what was clean became muddied. As the line of battle moved in one direction and then in the other, confusion of mind fragmented the unity of the nations themselves most fearful of aggression, provoked division of counsel in the United Nations, and led to acrimonious debates in the United States. Meanwhile, in the Korea that was to be rescued, towns and villages were obliterated, shops and farms overrun, and people by the million shot, starved, cast adrift.

The horrors of this war have called forth particular comment from Jawaharlal Nehru, a humane man who dislikes violence and who knows how bitter it is for a country that has little to lose much. As for the division of mind, he has become the symbol of it. Long the object of general admiration, he has suddenly become a center of political controversy, certain men of good will proclaiming that the way to peace and freedom is to be found underneath his perky Indian National Congress hat, and other men of good will insinuating that that particular hat is only a 1951 version of the 1938 umbrella.

IN DISCUSSING the tilt of Nehru's headgear and its very considerable bearing on the dilemma of how to meet aggression, it may be of value to consider the relation of moral judgments to the political situation. For the argument of 1951, no less than the argument of 1938, is an argument about morals, morals in the sense neither of a legalistic code of conduct nor of a philosophic framework of ideas, but in the sense of beliefs of persons or groups of persons as to what ought to be;

IN THE present conflict within the democratic world over the question of how best to meet Communist aggression in Asia, no single element has been so disturbing and puzzling as the position of India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, a man who has won the respect of all democratic peoples by his calm courage in the face of injustice, and who yet has opposed UN action to apply sanctions against Communist China or even merely to label China as an aggressor. Is Nehru to be dismissed as an "appeaser"?—it is a more complex matter than that, says HERRYMON MAURER, who here analyzes Nehru's present position in terms of his past history in Indian politics and his close association with Gandhi. Mr. Maurer is the author of a book on Gandhi, *Great Soul* (1948), and of a study of China, Japan, and Korea, *The Collision of East and West*, to be published in May by Henry Regnery. Mr. Maurer writes: "My own belief is in non-violence, and it is from that position that I presume to discuss, without intimate knowledge of Gandhi, the differences between him and Nehru, who after all knew Gandhi very intimately indeed."

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categorical imperatives compounded of fears, hopes, secret yearnings, half-forgotten habits, convictions of good and ideas of evil, notions of expediency, and beliefs as to the nature of the universe. The importance of this compound is suggested by the very structure of the United Nations. Countries new or old, large or small, are expected to stand up and be counted; and the count at the Assembly is a one-nation one-vote procedure which, since it cannot measure armed strength, measures in effect the moral sense of a congress of nations, a measurement of no little importance to the foreign policies of such governments as are concerned with the psychological reactions of their people. Most persons, indeed, are not inclined to act in a particular political or military situation until arguments or events have provoked some compelling moral reason for it. In the absence of such moral consensus, perplexity spreads. The perplexity that was typified by Neville Chamberlain, a man much concerned with moral principle, albeit not in a manner of which Nehru approved at the time, is typified in a different situation and in a different manner by Nehru himself.

This is to say that the perplexity is typified by the foreign policy of the government of India. Nehru is in no sense the dictator of that policy, which, indeed, seems to correspond with the convictions of most educated Indians, but he is the architect of it. It is a policy noteworthy, first of all, for its consistency. Since August 15, 1947, when the new government of India came into being, its foreign policy has not varied at all. It consists of a basic moral premise and of three political propositions.

The moral premise is revulsion against war and a desire for the freedom of all peoples from imperialist slavery. The propositions are, first, action with other countries against aggression; second, a refusal to align India with one or another group of dominant world powers; third, a desire to give moral support to countries trying to throw off the remnants of colonialism, as for instance Indonesia. This moral support has taken, among other shapes, the form of recognition of the government of any country in Asia which the government of India believes to represent the wishes of the people of that country. India for this reason recognizes Communist China and for the same reason has not yet recognized any regime in Indo-China.

This position, in effect, means active participation in matters Asiatic and careful neutrality in matters European. Europe, for Nehru, is the particular locus of national hostility. The theme of the relatively peaceful East and the relatively bellicose West runs through his writing and still finds expression in his speeches. In March 1949 he said, "Unfortunately the whole outlook of Europe in the past one hundred years has been the outlook of countries possessing great power, afraid of one another, or desirous of extending that power. So that today Europe is much more tied up with power politics than Asia is at present."

The policy of non-involvement with great powers, European powers, Nehru has defended spiritedly. In the fall of 1949 he said, "I am asked why India does not align herself with a particular nation or a group of nations, and told that because we have refrained from doing so, we are sitting on the fence. . . . But I should like to make it clear that the policy India has sought to pursue is not a negative and neutral policy. It is a positive and vital policy that flows from our struggle for freedom and from the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. How can . . . peace be preserved? Not by surrender to aggression, nor by compromising with evil or injustice, but also not by talking and preparing for war. Aggression has to be met, for that endangers peace. At the same time . . . the very process of marshaling the world into two hostile camps precipitates the conflict that it has sought to avoid."

WHEN aggression in fact occurred in Korea, Nehru had to spell out his policy of non-compromise and non-involvement more exactly in a situation of greater urgency. In June 1950, when the invasion of South Korea seemed to call for limited police action against a North Korean army, India lent her

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moral weight to the United Nations declaration against aggression. But by October 16, when Chinese Communist intervention in Korea had become an actuality, Nehru was talking more in terms of non-involvement. It was, he said, of "paramount importance to avoid world war." He proposed that the war be avoided by UN recognition of the Chinese Communists, a matter of "stark reality." He recalled India's disapproval of the protection of Formosa by the American fleet and her informal counsel against the crossing of the Thirty-eighth Parallel by the UN. "The common features of Asia today," he said, "are a reaction from the previous colonial regimes, a resurgent nationalism, agrarian movements, a desire to get rid of our economic backwardness, and a passionate desire for freedom."

During the next two months Nehru moved from a position of moral advice to one of moral leadership. Although Chinese Communist forces pushed into Tibet and curtly brushed aside Indian protests, India herself proposed that the United Nations shelve Tibet's complaint of aggressions, and she stated that a peaceful solution was likely to be produced. While the Chinese Communists were becoming more and more heavily involved in Korea and more and more denunciatory at Lake Success of "American aggression against China," India took the lead in attempting to work out cease-fire formulas, and persisted despite Chinese Communist rebuffs. At length she pressed the UN to negotiate peace according to a Chinese Communist formula that would, in effect, have given Korea over to the Korean Communists, cut off Formosa not only from support but from supplies, and admitted the Peiping regime to the UN. Meanwhile Nehru sought to persuade other British Commonwealth prime ministers that recognition of the Chinese Communists by the UN was imperative, and insisted that naming them aggressors would mean the danger of world war. Nehru's view did not, of course, prevail in the UN assembly, and the Chinese Communists were declared aggressors over strong Indian protest. At this point the Indian delegation, heretofore strong for conferences and consultations, declined further participation in efforts to arrange cease-fire talks.

It is evident that Nehru is convinced he is in no way compromising with evil. The man whom Gandhi often referred to as a son is no one to run away from evil; he has stood up to lathi blows, loss of wealth, and repeated imprisonment without personal complaint. Graduated from agitator against a government to first minister of its successor, he has lost none of his old concern for the right and the true. Here is a man of deep seriousness and good will, brilliant mind and great fluency, of remarkable energy, a man who has traveled much the same intellectual itinerary as prominent Western progressives, and who is unlike them chiefly in the fact that he has managed to remain himself and yet hold effective public office. It is not possible to doubt that Nehru's position on Korea has been thought out very carefully in moral terms.

The moral position, however, seems to collide with political and military facts. The two general propositions that aggression must be discouraged and world war must be avoided are unassailable, but their application to the specific situation in Korea provokes nettlesome questions, not to say contradictions. Which is more important, avoiding war or discouraging aggression? Should only that aggression be discouraged which is too small to provoke the spreading of war? How is it possible to refuse to compromise with evil or injustice without aligning India with one dominant power against another? Can it be that only small powers commit aggression? Furthermore, how is aggression to be met if there is not preparation for war? One way would be the use of Gandhi's direct-action non-violence, but Nehru has made no proposal that it be used in Korea. What else then remains but war and the preparation for it?

Nehru escapes from the dilemma thus posed by invoking proposition three: the dynamic of Asiatic nationalism, fretful at old

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colonial restraints, passionate for freedom, zealous for agrarian reform, anxious to throw off economic backwardness, and relatively innocent of power politics. According to this proposition, as soon as the Thirty-eighth Parallel was crossed by UN forces, "New China" was very naturally upset and saw herself threatened by the very powers which, because of their "reluctance and hesitation to accept the great changes that have come over Asia," had not given her a seat at the UN. Thus the mistakes of the Western powers led to Chinese participation in the Korean war and continue to lead to the danger of world war.

This position can be upheld, of course, only if a very important factual proposition can be proved. It must be demonstrated that Chinese Communism, even though formally allied to Russian Communism, is not a part of it but rather an evidence of "resurgent nationalism," "agrarian movements," and "a passionate desire for freedom." Unless this proposition be true, it is impossible to say that China shuns power politics as, say, India does; it is also impossible to say that the Chinese Communists have chosen to fight because of the old unequal treaties and the new zeal for nationalism. Indeed, if the proposition is not true, China becomes a victim of imperialism—of which Nehru is an avowed enemy—an imperialism emanating from Moscow.

Now the demonstration of Nehru's third proposition is exceedingly difficult inasmuch as the arguments to prove it are negated by the statements of Chinese Communist leaders not only during the past year but during the past three decades, statements which have shifted in careful correspondence with the Russian Communist party's line, and which have uniformly emphasized that all strength is owed and must be owed to the Soviet Union. In order to prove that "the fate of the world might well have been different" if China had been seated at Lake Success, Nehru will have to explain away these statements, along with a record of constant Russian preoccupation with determining the revolutionary strategy and tactics of the Chinese party, a continuing vigilance in maintaining a pure Stalinist orthodoxy in China, the giving of arms and supplies in Manchuria to the Chinese Red Army, the sending to China of large numbers of Russian advisors, and the imposition upon China of peculiarly Russian convictions about methods of jurisprudence, theories of genetics, the terminology of journalism, and the wording of the confessions of deviationists.

It is argued further, although not by Nehru—who is after all the head of a government—that the record of past Sino-Soviet intimacy hides a current split, that Mao Tse-tung rather than Joseph V. Stalin is coming to power in Asia, and that the differences between them are pregnant with Titoism. To be sure, it is easy to play all manner of guessing games about what China is up to and what Russia is up to in Korea. Russia may be trying to weaken China by exhausting her in a war in Korea. Or China may be trying to weaken Russia by playing a leading role in the war. Or they may both be trying to weaken the UN. It is possible to speculate even more widely and wonder whether the Chinese cultural soil will in the long run fail to nourish Russian weeds, or whether the soil is so barren that for a long time it will nourish nothing but weeds. In the midst of such speculation, however, it is wise to remember that present facts alone are available for the framing of policy and that for the present the only tangible "evidence" adduced to prove a falling out of Chinese and Russian Communism is the participation of Chinese Communism in an aggression launched by Russian Communism. (It should also be remembered that Titoism is a condition that was brought about not by Tito but by Stalin, who undertook to purge Tito for being personally somewhat too successful a Stalinist.)

If facts get seriously in the way of Nehru's position, what purpose does that position hope to serve? Clearly it does not aim to serve Russian Communism. Nehru is a determined foe of Communism at home and a determined advocate of as much democracy in political and economic life as it is possible

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at any moment to give India. His desire for freedom is indeed passionate; his concern with ridding India of industrial backwardness is indeed intense; and his India is indeed a new India. What then? Does Nehru want India to enjoy UN safeguards against aggression without the risk and effort of helping safeguard other countries? Does he simply want India to stay aloof from what he calls European power politics? There are close similarities between the foreign policies of new India and those of other new countries in the past, notably the United States in the 18th and early 19th centuries: keep quiet while the great powers squabble, give moral aid to peoples living under tyranny, proclaim the right of all peoples to self-determination.

Such a policy is obviously attractive to any country attacking urgent and bitter problems of poverty and starvation at home. Indeed there may be not a few Indians who support Nehru's foreign policy from a conviction that it will provide India a respite for reconstruction. But to see in that conviction the roots of Nehru's policy is to misread Nehru's own intellectual history, and it is in terms of that history that his present views need to be seen. For Nehru's mind is entirely awake to the difference between the 18th century and the 20th, and his voice has been one of the strongest that has been raised against aggression and against that compromise with aggression which is called appeasement. In the 1930's he berated the English government, and to a lesser degree the French, for failure to put down aggression in Manchuria, for willingness to tolerate the growth of fascism, for the betrayal of Abyssinia, and for indirect aid to the Spanish fascists. He savagely condemned Chamberlain and his entire government for Munich.

Indeed, in reading Nehru's writings one feels that they express not so much an Indian mind which appreciates the West as a Western mind which appreciates India. A nationalist revolutionary educated at Harrow and Cambridge, a traveler throughout the countries of Europe, an omnivorous reader, a man of practical political experience and also of serious and self-critical inward reflection, Nehru seems somehow to personify the man of reason and good will, the liberal who moved through the welter of ideas of the 20's, the 30's, and the 40's, seeking valiantly the best life for the greatest number of people. His mind was questioning and open. Science, he felt, was the great hope for the better life; freedom was the avenue toward it: "a means to an end, that end being the raising of the people in question to higher levels and hence the general improvement of humanity." There was in him a sense of the unknown and unknowable, but he pushed aside dogmas of religion, found a sense of life's meaning in the mind and spirit of man, which has tried "to fathom the secrets of the universe and brought the vagaries of nature itself to its use," and which has turned from superstition toward ethics and morals. He saw his task as bringing a message of scientific enlightenment to his own country in terms that she could embrace, and he developed a lively appreciation of her history and culture.

Politically he was socialist. "A study of Marx and Lenin," he wrote in 1944, "produced a powerful effect on my mind and helped me see history and current affairs in a new light." He saw men and nations acting in terms of their economic interests, became convinced that the basic aim of British rule was to make India produce raw materials and buy finished goods, and therefore to block all native industry. (He said once that the government of India was the shadow of the City of London.) Fascism he saw as the necessary consequence of the effort of owning classes to protect their vested interests. He became convinced of the need for an organized, planned economy to insure social and economic justice and promote greater freedom for the individual. He was attracted to large-scale government or cooperative projects. And yet he would not become a dogmatic socialist. In him theory was always tempered by a practical sense of the particular needs of his country; he shunned profitless theorizing and ideological in-fighting; he tried, indeed, to bring the Socialist

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members of the Indian National Congress closer to members of more conservative economic beliefs.

He was much impressed by the Soviet Union, but he did not like its use of violence, its power politics, its opportunism, its divergence from Marxist principles, its regimentation. Yet, he said, "perhaps the only way to real personal freedom was some such limitation in the social sphere." He was "considerably upset" by the trials and purges in Russia in the 30's, but at the same time, he reported, "the progress made in the Russian economy, the advancing standards of the people, the great advance in cultural matters, and many other things continued to impress me." In September 1939 he wrote: "The Russo-German Pact came as a shock and a surprise to many. . . . There seemed to be too much over-reaching, cynicism, and opportunism about it. . . . There can be, and there is going to be, no real alliance between Hitler and Stalin. But both are willing enough to play at the game of power politics. Russia has suffered enough at the hands of England to resent it bitterly." In 1944 he noted that Russia seemed to be following a policy of grouping dependent or semi-dependent neighbors around her, and hoped that Russia and the United States would cooperate for peace. His writings and speeches thereafter make few references to Russia: the head of a government can hardly afford to expose his views as a social historian. It certainly cannot be assumed that he approves of deliberate acts of Soviet expansionism, as in Poland, say, or Korea, but it may perhaps be assumed that his attention is not so sharply caught by less obvious methods of expansion, as for instance Russian expansion into China by way of a Chinese Communist party.

Nehru's experience is the experience of a great many socialists, pacifists, and assorted progressives of the West, only the experience is somewhat more engagingly and literately put than theirs usually is. The essence of it is perhaps free-ranging thought and a tolerance so wide that it does not push toward extreme conclusions. The two convictions which Nehru did indeed push to an extreme were his revulsion against fascism and his whole-hearted espousal of Indian independence, both of which were attended with an entrenched distaste for British exploitation. But this evil, to Nehru's mind a matter of economic arrangements, passed with the passing of the arrangements, so that Nehru now speaks not so much of the old imperialism as of the new Asia.

That is not to say that he speaks mutedly. Full of energy and earnestness, he is intense in his proposals for India's betterment, he is intense in his propositions for world peace, he is intense in his pleas for understanding of the new Asia, he is intense in his hopes that violence and war will cease in Korea. In short, he is intense in good will and tolerance.

THE question to ask, therefore, is why Nehru's intensely moral position appears to be out of step with current facts. Facts and morals, to be sure, often collide. Indeed it is perhaps the function of morals to attempt to alter facts, at least such of them as are considered evil—aggression in Korea, for instance. Such attempts, however, have historically been made from either of two extreme positions that have certain characteristics in common. Neither of these positions requires intolerance toward the actual human beings who do evil. Both require intolerance toward the evil itself. Both consciously view evil from the vantage point of a standard of values. Both consciously take very great risks to eradicate evil. At this point, however, the two positions part company and attack evil in opposite ways. One of these ways has been sometimes praised and sometimes denounced as the wisdom of the world; the other has been proclaimed by saints and prophets as an eternal truth admitting no compromise.

Confronted with evil, a worldly morality chooses between evils, and risks or even employs a lesser evil to overcome a greater. Confronted with the twin horrors of aggression and of war, worldly morality is willing to risk the evil of the second to overcome the evil of the first. Abraham Lincoln may be taken as an unusually poignant personification of this morality: a man who hates vio-

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lence and is grieved at the thought of fratricide accepts the evil of war because he is certain that the evil of a divided country is more hateful and more grievous. Such a morality does not, of course, mean a desperate and immediate plunge into battle. Worldly morality will temporize, even compromise, if necessary, with evil, but only in such a way as to gain strength (as in Civil War times the North temporized for some decades over the issue of slavery), never in such a way as to lose strength. Confronted by a Communism that has itself declared the rest of the world hostile to it, worldly morality searches for arms and allies and tries to build up such armed power that the evil of aggression may be curbed, if possible without war, but if necessary by war. To this sort of morality a trade of Korea and Formosa in exchange for an uncertain peace can be calculated to be no trade: such a bargain would mean not only the loss of Formosa as an anti-Communist symbol and as a base for 500,000 armed troops, but also a psychological blow to other countries who may be called upon to resist aggression. Better to be forced out of Korea while still fighting than to stand such a loss.

Nehru's moral position clearly does not fall into this category. Nehru is not at all willing to risk general war or even to dicker and dally to gain time for better preparation to meet the risk. Nehru justifies his caution, which, one suspects, arises out of his distaste for violence, by arguing that the Chinese Communists are not so much militarily aggressive as diplomatically ill-used. And he sees danger, not opportunity, in outside aid to Formosa; to him such aid is old-fashioned meddling in the new Asia.

Where then do Nehru's moral principles come from? Do they come from the other extreme: anti-worldly morality that will not use violence to put down violence? This morality has traditionally assumed two different aspects. One of them is expressed in Isaiah's cry that the safety of Israel lay in ceasing to make leagues and in holding to quiet faith. This is essentially a method of fighting evil by a determined refusal to take any notice of it and by a willingness on the part of a people, a religious order, or even a small group of individuals, to live out the implications of their morality in their own lives, no matter what destruction and suffering a violent aggressor may bring upon them. This method has been used at one time or another by most of the higher religions.

Nehru has had no actual experience of this method; his experience lies with a method which attempts to deal frontally and energetically with evil without using evil as a weapon. This method has also been used at times by various of the higher religions, but it is particularly associated with the direct-action non-violence taught and practiced by Gandhi. Essentially it means taking suffering upon oneself instead of causing suffering to one's opponent. It rests on the conviction that all men of all races and nations have in them the same truth, however differently they express it, and that in the long run (not necessarily in the short run) this truth will respond to the suffering of a man or of a group of men who refuse to inflict hurt on others. "It does not mean," said Gandhi, "meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the putting one's soul against the will of the tyrant." In practice, Gandhian non-violence developed strategies, tactics, and even an army-like chain of organization and command. It countered aggression with large armies of weaponless men and women who marched with calm and even smiling determination against an enemy prepared to shoot, beat, and trample upon them.

IF ANY one thing was responsible for Indian independence it was this direct-action non-violence. Nehru played an important and courageous role during the twenty-five-odd years it was practiced, and the impress of it is definitely upon him. Thus in 1949 he said, "We opposed [one of the greatest of world powers] in a particular way, and in a large measure succeeded in that way, and I have no doubt that if worst comes to the worst—and in a military sense we cannot meet these great powers—it is far better for us to fight in our own way than submit to

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them and lose all the ideals we have." But in the same year he also said: "Protecting oneself unfortunately means relying on the armed forces and the like, and so we build up, where necessity arises, our defense apparatus. We cannot take the risk of not doing so, although Mahatma Gandhi would have taken that risk, no doubt, and I dare not say that he would have been wrong. . . . But we are small folk and dare not take that risk."

Whenever, in fact, Nehru speculated about the relationship of means and ends he finished with questions rather than answers. He saw the possibility of "the wrong means distorting and sometimes even destroying the end in view. But the right means," he noted also, "might well be beyond the capacity of infirm and selfish human nature. What was one to do? Not to act was a confession of failure and a submission to evil; to act meant often enough a compromise with some form of that evil, with all the untoward consequences that such compromises result in."

As a specific technique in a specific situation—a conquered India in which there were no weapons—Nehru approved non-violence and even felt a strong emotional attachment to it. Nehru was close to Gandhi, he admired him, loved him; he has written perhaps the most moving and graphic descriptions of him. But he was not a follower of Gandhi. When Gandhi said, "If India takes up the doctrine of the sword, she may gain momentary victory," Nehru wrote. "We were moved by these arguments, but for us and for the National Congress as a whole the non-violent method was not, and could not be, a religion or an unchallengeable creed or dogma. It could only be a policy and a method promising certain results, and by those results it would have to be finally judged." This sounds like the statement of a man who understands worldly morality. Unlike Gandhi, he is fighting not so much against evil wherever it turns up as against the specific evil of colonialism, and he is willing to use whatever weapons give the best results against that evil. He is thinking about these results, not about the truth that lives in each man. "Gandhi," Nehru complained, "is always thinking of personal salvation and sin, while most of us have society's welfare uppermost in our minds." It is not surprising that the government of which Nehru became prime minister has devoted half its budget to military preparations, that it has invaded the principality of Hyderabad, and that it has used arms to protect its interests in Kashmir. It is symbolic also that that government did not hesitate to hang the assassin of the man who believed that violence should never be repaid with violence.

But at the same time Nehru was deeply affected by Gandhi. "Step by step he convinced us of the rightness of the action, and we went with him, although we did not accept his philosophy. . . . Gandhi always knew India far better than we did, and a man who could command such tremendous devotion must have something that corresponded to the needs and aspirations of the masses." Nehru not only took part in non-violent action, he even curbed the scale of his living and his tastes in food. Once after he had become prime minister a crowd of Hindus was demonstrating in front of the house where Gandhi was fasting for Hindu-Moslem unity. Nehru was just entering the house when he heard the cry, "Let Gandhi die." Moved instinctively to non-violent protest, he ran after the crowd, shouting, "How dare you say that? Kill me first! Kill me first!"

The concern of a worldly morality is to have enough force, violent force, to overcome the concrete evil that threatens it. The concern of an anti-worldly morality, whether it disdains evil or battles against it, is to have no violence whatsoever. Isaiah's denunciation of leagues and his upholding of quiet faith did not mean that there should be 50 per cent more faith and 50 per cent less alliance with Egypt. The middle ground is the dangerous ground; it provides neither enough force nor enough faith. But it is on this sort of middle ground that Nehru appears to be standing. He seems to be trying to be 50 per cent Gandhi and 50 per cent something else.

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TO UNDERSTAND this mixture, it is necessary to examine more closely the areas of disagreement with Gandhi into which Nehru's intellectual position took him. Indeed, the profound drama of Gandhi's life—a non-violent struggle against evil which ended in Hindu-Moslem violence and in the establishment of the Indian National Congress as the chief force in a government of an ordinary violent sort—was closely tied up with Nehru. Nehru and the generation of intellectuals of which he is the symbol were shocked by Gandhi's idea that the Congress should act as a non-violent check upon any government that would be in India. He was taken aback by Gandhi's suggestion that agrarian reform could be carried out very simply by the farmers' non-violent appropriation of the landlords' land. He was impatient at times with Gandhi's concern for causes other than independence; at the time of Gandhi's first fast for the untouchables, Nehru wrote, ". . . would not the larger issues fade into the background?"

It was difficult to be in sympathy with Gandhi's lack of concern with long-range political and economic planning, difficult to share his near-anarchistic ideas of a political and economic life centered around small village communities. Believing that the right government and the right environment would take care of the people's needs and solve social ills, Nehru could not understand Gandhi's preoccupation with the battle of good and evil in the individual human being. Educated in a liberal tradition which considered evil simply a consequence of social misarrangements, Nehru could not attach himself to any morality that treated energetically the problem of deep-rooted evil except in relation to the specific evils of European imperialism and fascism. At the same time, his tolerant, liberal optimism and his somewhat sanguine beliefs in the capacity of science and social organizations to cure the problems of mankind turned him away from morality of the worldly sort and inclined him to be at least half tolerant of Gandhi. And no intellectual beliefs could shield him from the magnetism of Gandhi's being. He spent much of his life working beside a man of whom he said, ". . . often the unknown stared at us through his eyes." Nehru could not believe in non-violence as a policy for a free India, but he could at least believe with great earnestness in no more than a very little violence. Thus Nehru and the intellectuals like him fell into the confused middle ground that lies between two distinct moralities that can respect each other but cannot mix. The misfortune of Nehru's position is that he has tried to mix them. In his proposals for a moral settlement of the warfare in Korea he has tried not only to mix them, but to sell the mixture to the world.

Gandhi offered no mixture. He was engaged, after all, in a personal battle against evil of any sort and in a group battle against it whenever enough persons understood non-violence and were trained in its practice. In him there was no neutrality, no middle ground. "Between violence and cowardly flight," he said, "I can only prefer violence to cowardice. I can no more preach non-violence to a coward than I can tempt a blind man to enjoy healthy scenes. . . . A rabbit that runs away from the bull terrier is not particularly non-violent." He said also, "I can and I do hate evil wherever it exists. I hate the system of government that the British people have set up in India. I hate the domineering manner of Englishmen as a class in India. I hate the ruthless exploitation of India even as I hate from the bottom of my heart the hideous system of untouchability for which millions of Hindus have made themselves responsible." He was no less aroused than Nehru by the Munich agreement—he called it "peace without honor"—and he considered Nazism an evil to be fought—non-violently, of course.

When World War II came, he said, "[Hitler] contemptuously rejected the way of peace and persuasion and chose that of the sword. Hence my sympathy for the cause of the Allies. But my sympathy must *not* be interpreted to mean endorsement in any shape or form of the doctrine of the sword for the defense of even proved right." And in 1942, when the Japanese were pressing upon India, he said that he was willing to

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sacrifice the lives of half the people of India in non-violent resistance. This is the language of genuine moral extremism. It is not entirely unlike the language of the moral extremism that lies on the other side of morality's middle ground, the chief difference being that Gandhi, who believed the evil of war lay in killing and not in being killed, was convinced that killing would lead only to further killing while being killed would give hope in the long run of stopping killing altogether.

GANDHI did not anticipate specific moral issues; he reacted to them as they appeared, and he never insisted that his opinions on any emergent issue would be infallible. To speculate, therefore, about what he would have said about aggression in Korea is difficult. Clearly, of course, his opinions would have centered around the morality of non-violence. Clearly they would have had an inner consistency: aggression was always aggression to him, whether it was the act of a single person or of an entire nation; certainly he would have found it hard to believe that aggression that was inexcusable on the part of small North Korea was excusable on the part of big Communist China. Probably he would have insisted on the wisdom of negotiation; and just as probably he would have insisted against fundamental compromise with aggression. He emphasized again and again that it was best to counter evil with non-violence, not so good to counter it with violence, but worst of all to run away from it—to compromise with it, to be neutral toward it.

It is not pleasant to suggest that neutrality describes the position of Jawaharlal Nehru, no man to run away from personal danger. And yet his position leaves him no alternative but a running away—an intellectual running away from facts. A person who can put his trust neither in the violence of the worldly morality nor in the non-violence of the anti-worldly is defenseless. Such a neutral has only two avenues of retreat in the face of evil; he can insist that the evil is not his concern, or he can insist that the supposed evil does not exist. In his comments on Korea, Nehru in effect insists that the evil of Chinese Communist aggression indeed does not exist.

In attempting to stand on a non-existent moral ground between the two extremes of worldly morality and anti-worldly morality, Nehru typifies intellectuals not only in India but in the West. Nehru's confusion is their confusion. A very great deal of what is called pacifism or tolerance or good will among Western liberals consists of a refusal to identify evil and therefore to take a moral stand against it. To such liberals, Nehru's policy seems indeed the great and right way toward peace. But while such a policy may indeed be of a certain limited use at times when the ebb and flow of political and military fortunes stirs panic and prompts the use of more violence than the objective situation requires, it nonetheless remains a policy that confuses peace with passivity toward evil.

This is not to say that the West should promptly engage itself in a wholesale extirpation of the evil of Stalinist Communism, whether by methods violent or non-violent; in many cases evil is most effectively extirpated, as Gandhi clearly understood, by those whom it most intimately affects; it may be, for instance, that the Russian people are the only people who can root out the social evil within their own country. It is rather to say that men both of the East and of the West need to remain alert to the evil —and to the suffering—with which history brings them intimately in touch. The danger is insensitivity to evil and suffering, and this insensitivity has been widespread. In the last analysis it may well be that Easterners like Nehru fail to be alert to current evil because Westerners like ourselves have failed to be alert to the evils and to the suffering that have been and to some extent still are being visited upon the countries of the East.

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THE TASK OF BEING AN AMERICAN JEW

The Modern Rediscovery of Jewish Life and Faith

LEO S. BAECK

IN THE previous issue of this magazine there appeared an impressive article by Professor David Daiches, an article that was a spirited confession of his faithful unbelief. We should be grateful to COMMENTARY for having published it, and, of course, first and foremost to the author for having written it. It was the confession of a sincere and thoughtful man, and we are not to take it lightly. For Mr. Daiches had cast his eye about, scanning the province of American Judaism, and nearly all that he found he found wanting. He did not discover any door inviting him to enter. Only toward some unpretentious vestibule of an Orthodox *shul* did he feel occasionally inclined to wend his way, and, at a propitious hour, go within to experience some intense devotional moments.

Much that he says will appeal to the sentiments and judgment of others. For there are more than a few Jews, gently or peremptorily declining to be Orthodox, who yet, like that man whom he cites with respect, are used to saying *tachanun*, and probably not only on Mondays and Thursdays. They, too, perhaps do not like to hear our synagogues being called temples (by the way, this name is not American-born, but came here as an immigrant from the quite Orthodox regions of Moravia and Hungary), nor do they take kindly to the ultra-modernizing, over-Americanizing speeches delivered so often by so many rabbis. These very same un-Orthodox people, though not, like Mr. Daiches, brought up in Scotland, will also wholeheartedly confirm from their own experience what our author warmly remembers: how handsomely a genuine and distinctive Jewishness may contribute to a true coming-to-terms with the Gentiles, and how a familiarity with our Hebrew Bible may evoke among them a respectful and genial responsiveness. And they are equally ready to agree with the emphasis he places upon the old synagogue song, they feel grief at its being lost in some Jewish regions; the Jewish people, they believe, always were and should remain a singing people, singing in their synagogues, maybe unsolemnly, but singing themselves—not by proxy, by the choir.

Yet there are some problems that Mr. Daiches resolves in a way that should, and I hope will, evoke disagreement rather than nostalgic assent. They are significant problems, touching upon the essence of Judaism. It is therefore important that this disagreement be reasoned rather than partisan and harsh. Mr. Daiches' article is a fair challenge and must be fairly answered.

THERE is, first, the problem of this colorful being that is called Man and its

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IN THE February COMMENTARY, we published an article, "American Judaism: A Personal View," by David Daiches, professor of comparative literature at Cornell University and well-known literary critic, which looked with a disapproving eye on its subject, comparing Mr. Daiches' memories of his Orthodox youth in Scotland with the current practices of Reform and Conservative congregations in this country, to the latter's immense disadvantage. LEO S. BAECK, in reply to Mr. Daiches, here vigorously defends our evolving liberalized Judaism as a natural and healthy—indeed inevitable—form for the Jewish spirit in the modern age. Dr. Baeck, who is now in residence at Hebrew Union College, was formerly chief rabbi of Berlin, and emerged from the ordeal of the Theresienstadt concentration camp to become the outstanding creative thinker and spokesman of liberal Judaism in England and the United States, just as he had been in Germany for five decades previously. He is the author of *The Essence of Judaism*, *The Pharisees and Other Essays*, and other volumes.

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relation to this particular, curious species called Jews. Mr. Daiches seems to be aware of some unsolved puzzle here, for when summing up his arguments and declaring: "I am a man, and I am interested in humanity," he carefully advances the qualification, "with an individual background and heritage as every man has."

Aye, there's the rub! Everybody on this our earth is an individual, and it is only in the form of an individual that existence is conferred; what birth brings forth, what death brings to an end, at least in our world, is individuality. But wherever there is individuality, there is always a background and heritage, a system, a physical and biological, a psychological and historical, a geographical and social system which holds, permeates, and complicates the individual. And where there is a system, there are also laws, which set conditions and relations, which rule, direct, and restrict one and all of these individual universes. Only within "heritages," within systems and their laws, do individualities have their life. And within his heritage, man has his life in a special manner.

What has evidently fallen to man's share, what signifies the *human* particularity—although possibly, in a manner unknown to us, it might be the property of the other individualities, too—is the faculty of consciousness, of becoming aware of one's individual life and its direction. And thus it is that upon a man, by means of his consciousness, there are imposed both chance and choice—the chance for him to grow capable of feeling his life to be a problem, and the choice for him to make of converting this *problem* into his *task*. Such is man, and such is his original trial: to experience consciously his heritage, to realize himself within the laws of nature and history, to unfold a distinctive personal character, to establish an ownership of life. Only if we appreciate this can the problem be understood and the task approached—the problem and task of being a man, and the problem and task of being a Jew, a Jewish man.

In each life there live the experiences of the many generations that came before it. Every life, within its allotted years, compresses centuries of destiny and fate, and is itself fettered by bonds established prior to its birth. This is true for all men but not always in the same way. For essential historical divergences emerge, divergences more substantial than those between any two individuals as such. There are the rich and the poor heritages; centuries that have been fertile or barren, dynamic or static, cultured or barbaric, centuries of real history or of mere existence—history only begins when men start thinking, that is, when they dare to engage in problems, in reflecting on reasons and consequences. We know that peoples with a history can have a continuance in it, a historic perseverance, possessing an antiquity, a Middle Ages, and a present that is uniquely their own. Thus there are, on the one hand, certain "chosen" peoples, having an exceptional heritage and background, and, on the other hand, peoples as yet lacking such a singularity.

Here we are brought face to face with the Jew and with the problem and task inherent in being a Jew. And it is by being brought face to face with it in this way that we can come to understand both the Judaism of the last century and American Reform Judaism.

THE strata of the Jewish heritage are deeper and more influential than perhaps any other. The Jew has known older days, and they were days of constant thinking and speculating; he has older eyes and ears than most people—he could here be compared with the Indian and Chinese, but he differs from them in that he has experienced many a land, many a climate, and many an earthquake too. This Jewish ear sometimes heard, and this Jewish eye sometimes saw, what others did not, or have not even yet. And the Jewish mind throughout the centuries was one stirred by an imperative hope, it was a mind in motion, a mind on the way, often acutely tensed with strain. The Jew was always in the midst of the Jewish fact and the Jewish problem. He might forsake them, they never forsook him.

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The individual Jew might sometimes yearn for assurance, assurance in orthodoxies, spiritual or national. Yet somewhere within the Jew there is a perpetual fountainhead of Jewish dynamics, perhaps crusted over today, but one day certain to send forth a stream, with its whirls and eddies, of Jewish problematics: a day bound to come in his own life or in his children's or grandchildren's. The noble savage of the 18th-century sentimentalists could happily say: I am a man with my individual background—meaning only *my* individual background. His Jewish antipode neither could nor can say the same; his is the crucial specificity, he is the Jewish man, and only as this Jewish man may he be a man. Even those Jews who have made their stand quite outside of Judaism, great and audacious personalities like Heine, Marx, Disraeli—for their times, indeed, they may have stood outside and opposite; for the centuries, however, they were within.

In the revolutionary epoch of the past two centuries, the Jews were put to a crucial test, experiencing a transformation such as scarcely any other community has ever undergone, and comparable only to that which the Jews themselves had once suffered when entering the Greek world. When the Jew left the ghetto, he left not only a social and economic condition, but was disengaged from the very form of his existence. An existential problem was to be solved, and to do so—and only so could it be done—the problem had to be converted into a task. The old spiritual compass could operate no more. The Jew had lost his sense of direction.

Consequently, the Jew became aware one day that he, as a Jew, no longer could express himself, neither to the world nor to himself, as he had so easily done through a thousand years. He was threatened, as a Jew, with being a mute. A new language had to be discovered in order to make the Jew understood and able to express himself, and since each language has its own logic, its method of thinking and reasoning, it had really to be *new*. This learning to speak his mind, to speak as a Jew—this was the Jewish problem and the Jewish task of those recent generations of which we are the heirs. This was the historic question, in an age when the new Jewish times seemed to deny, and to be denied by, the old Jewish centuries.

It is one of the momentous achievements of Jewish history that the challenge was met as an adventure—a faithful adventure in which the first pioneers were such un-Orthodox men as Moses Mendelssohn, Leopold Zunz, Nachman Krochmal. Not very felicitously, the movement that sprang from them is usually called Reform, but it is more than that, it is nearer to a spiritual revolution. When most people speak of it, they think first, or only, of outward adjustments affecting, for example, the dietary and sabbatical laws, or the prayer book, the choir, and organ. But what profoundly stirred those pioneers, and what aroused their enthusiasm, were not such external matters. It was the problem of their own Jewish life, the vital problem of the Jewish man, that had laid hold of them—this problem of that existence which is the ground of a man's substance and which underlies all manifestations of his individuality. They faced the question whether the Jew had been sentenced by history henceforth to exist outside of himself, to see himself as a historical object, or whether, in these new revolutionary days, he could and should rediscover himself and become again radically conscious of his existence.

This was the outstanding historic accomplishment of the men of the Reform movement. They heard the question and, hearing it, they rediscovered the Jew, his problem and task, rediscovered Jewish life and faith. They gave to a new epoch the Jew and Judaism, and gave to the Jew and Judaism a new epoch. It was no easy thing to do, requiring strenuous intellectual effort and enduring moral confidence. But the men of the Reform strove hard and, for the most part, they succeeded. They renewed the Jewish tongue and enabled Judaism again

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to express itself. A language, an effective agency of the spirit, was created anew. Judaism could be voiced again.

And these men of the Reform, with their scholarship and historical research, also formed a new sense of history, and afforded a fuller knowledge of permanence and change in Jewish life. The Jew reconquered his memory, and the Jewish remembrance again proved to be a dynamic remembrance that engenders and nourishes hope. The Jew began to discern that direction of faith—true faith means first a direction—which rules the voluntary paths and dominates the forced detours. He felt his own days to be history; thereby a new human self-consciousness was born, a new sense of human responsibility. That old Jewish religious power again broke through, by virtue of which a Jew can never be merely "interested in humanity" but is bound up in humanity, in bearing his part of mankind's destiny, in enduring for himself mankind's hope—suffering from hope *is* the Jewish heritage.

Thus, as a result of the Reform, Jewish spirit and existence were enabled to withstand a profound crisis. Judaism could affirm itself and commence a new epoch of its own. We are still in the midst of its course, but we can even now become aware of its significance. It is an epoch rich in risks and achievements, pregnant with problems, abundant in luminous personalities. It was as if a volcano, which had appeared dormant for a very long time, did prove its might again. One must know what went before to perceive the importance of the new. Without the Reform there would be, not only no new Liberal Judaism, but no new Conservatism, no new Orthodoxy, no new Hasidism, even no new Zionism. They all are the offspring of Reform, Reform's legitimate children, and they all speak the Jewish language taught by their mother, the Reform movement. Certainly there was, and is, a narrower sense to Reform: accommodations and adjustments to the new era that were, in part, good and necessary, in part bad and unnecessary. (It should be pointed out, though, that Conservatism and Orthodoxy have also, for both better and worse, been reformed in this sense.) But however useful and proper such adjustment may have been, it is of secondary importance to Reform. Its primary achievement was and is a new method, a new outlook, a new way. But for this Reform, we would not have today our Orthodox or un-Orthodox Jewish life, our Jewish confessions of belief, disbelief, or unbelief. Jewish Reform, in the breadth of its view, made allowance for many a turn, save for one shift indeed: for a "believing in Jewish theology"—that is, believing in any arrangement, old or new, of real or supposed Jewish doctrine. What a curious mistake to suppose that such a thing is to be found anywhere within the Jewish sphere, whether the Orthodox or the un-Orthodox!

ONLY by understanding the real significance of Reform shall we understand the American Jew and American Reform. When, in the 19th century, the Jews from Central Europe came in great numbers to settle in America, this was their second emigration: their first had been out of the ghetto. (Later on, when many Jews left Eastern Europe to come to America, they experienced these two emigrations at once.) They entered America, this new world without an antiquity and a Middle Ages of its own, and found something quite new ready to welcome them. Another language, and not just an American English, was spoken here. The spirit of the Declaration of Independence, which can be called the Grand Adventure, and of the Constitution, which can be called the Grand Experiment, began to pervade them. A second Reform, an American Reform, was felt to be needed.

All the religious communities here have experienced this American Reform. There is an American Protestantism and an American Catholicism just as there is an American Judaism, and the attribute "American" must always be especially accentuated. Epigrammatically overstating, one could even dare to say: all confessions in America

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are somehow and somewhat like denominations of one extensive faith which means America. That American readiness for adventure and experiment is, more or less, common to them all. They show a glad preparedness for the new beginning.

The second Reform of Judaism, as first carried out by the immigrants from Central Europe, did, and perhaps sometimes had to, make more radical accommodations than had been made in Europe, and here and there a step backward had to be taken later on. But theirs was the enthusiasm and theirs is the historic achievement. It is owing to them that there is, in its many nuances, this American Judaism, that hundreds of thousands, later millions, as true Jews became Americans, and as Americans remained conscious of being true Jews, that as American Jews they were able sincerely to express themselves and to enrich their country's thought and vision.

ONE great task however still lies before Reform as it does before Conservatism also—though it is Reform that especially justifies itself in showing the way. This task is the reestablishment of the Bible in the life of the Jew, for to him the Bible must never come to be mere "literature." Time and again, through the Bible, the Jewish people has rediscovered itself; the history of Jewish thought is the history of these renaissances and reformations. This book can never, to a Jew, be only a matter for knowledge or research. The depth of the command and of the mystery is rooted in it; ever anew it claims man. Without this book the Jewish people could not survive, and without this people the essentials of this book would no longer live. The two belong to one another.

To be sure, this book stirs the soul, many a complacency is disturbed, many a self-satisfaction greatly disquieted. Unless, of course, one is an agnostic to whom the Bible is "literature"—as seems to be the case with Mr. Daiches. Yet life evades one risk only to run another, and there is obviously someone for Mr. Daiches to be afraid of: this Elisha ben Abuyah who "has long fascinated" him. For this man was quite different from what Mr. Daiches supposes him to have been. He had traveled and crossed many a road, from Gnosticism to being "Aher" (an "Other"), and his life bore the scars of trials. Should he one day be disposed to call at Ithaca, New York, there would be an uneasy moment at Cornell University. For, seeing the houses of learning and hearing literature lectured there, he would at once, as often he did in Palestinian houses of learning, begin to turn the youth out of doors, shouting, as related by the Talmud Yerushalmi (Hagiga 77b): "Out with you, you lazy people, stop idling away your days. Begin a human work, start you becoming a carpenter, and you a mason, you a tailor, and you a fisherman." Maybe Mr. Daiches would no longer feel fascinated.

But, in conclusion, I should like to proffer to Mr. Daiches my sincere thanks for what his confession has called to my mind; without him, I should not have said what I wanted so much to say. And if he will permit me to quote the very same Elisha ben Abuyah (Sifre on Deuteronomy 4:9): "Has someone induced his neighbor to attempt some fair doing, he may be considered as having done it himself."

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A SLAVE LABORER IN SOVIET SIBERIA

A Personal Account

EMILIA LISS

But, behold they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice.—Exodus

THE two NKVD men called for me a little before two in the morning. I was waiting for them. They had been arresting people in my neighborhood during the last forty-eight hours and I was aware that it might be my turn at any moment. I lay on my bed, fully dressed, with a packed valise beside me. Out in the street there was a lot of noise: the clanking of trucks, loud voices shouting names, bells ringing piercingly at the doors of houses. . . . My room was filled with the quiet of fear. Beams of light from reflectors glided softly over the dark walls. . . . Finally there was the sharp sound of the doorbell.

They were both tall, in fine uniforms and high boots, with revolvers strapped to their belts. One was a typical Russian, with light hair and blue eyes. The other a young Jew: black eyes, dark hair, hooked nose. Both looked sullen, and began to shout as soon as they got to the threshold:

"Make it quick! Get ready! We haven't much time."

"Where are you taking me?"

"What? Don't you know?" said the blond one. "Why, you're returning to your own homeland, your dear Poland. It will be as cosy as paradise." They laughed loudly.

When they saw the valise they became suspicious. "Unpack it at once!" shouted one of them. And as I tried to unlock it, awkwardly, with clumsy hands because I was shaking so, he made an impatient gesture: "Come on! Hurry up!"

"What have you got there? Weapons, gold, watches?" asked the other.

"No. Just some clothes and underwear."

"Take as little as possible!" shouted the blond Russian. "You will receive everything where you're going."

But a moment later, when he left the room for a moment, the other man whispered to me: "Take all you can. Over there everything will be of use."

Finally we left. In a truck, with a lot of others, I was taken to the police station. Our documents were checked and then they drove us to the station. After some more red tape, I was put on a prisoner's train. I was quickly on my way to Siberia and forced labor.

THE place was a small town in the East of Poland. The time, June 1940. My crime —refusal of Soviet citizenship.

In the fall of 1939, after the signing of the Hitler-Stalin Pact, when Germany occupied the western half of Poland and Russia the eastern half, streams of refugees, mostly Jewish and seeking safety from Nazi persecution, began to flood into the Soviet-occupied towns. There they settled down precariously to wait out the war, which by then seemed very far away in the West. Then, in the spring of 1940, a ray of hope appeared on the horizon. As the result of an agreement between the German and Rus-

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THE story here published is among the few first-hand accounts of life as a deportee in a Soviet slave-labor camp that have as yet reached the West. The writer, who for the protection of her relatives must conceal her identity under a pseudonym, is a native of Warsaw and a member of the Roman Catholic faith, though she is descended through one of her parents from an old Jewish family. Just before the German Army's entry into Warsaw, she fled to the eastern part of Poland, whence in 1940 she was deported by the Russians to a labor camp in Siberia. After her release in 1942, she spent some time in the Near East and is now living in one of the Western European countries. This article has been translated from the Polish by Lola Kinel.

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sian authorities, a certain number of refugees were to be allowed to return to their homes in the West.

By June a number of German commissions had arrived in the three largest cities of the Eastern Zone: Lvov, Przemysl, and Brzesc (Brest-Litovsk). Elegant, well-groomed officers now appeared on the dirty, neglected streets of these Soviet-occupied towns. And wherever they showed themselves they were instantly besieged by crowds of Jews begging for permission to return to their homes in Western Poland. This, no doubt, now seems incredible. But the truth is that at that time none of us, neither Jew nor Gentile, suspected the full extent of Nazi anti-Semitism. The general idea prevailed that only members of the German underground and certain prominent Jews, liberals, etc., were being sent to concentration camps. The ordinary, insignificant little people thought they were quite safe. Hence the spectacle, bitter in retrospect, of stiff, well-dressed German officers being stopped wherever they went by Jews begging for permits to return home. For the Polish Jews were by now mortally afraid of the Bolsheviks and the Germans looked "civilized" by comparison. The German officers were surprised, laughed loudly, and took pictures. Some of them said frankly that they didn't "advise anyone" to return to German-occupied territory, but this didn't impress the homeless Jews.

When the German commissions once began functioning, Jews mingled with Gentile Poles, trying to obtain false identification papers in order to get over the border. Very few of them succeeded in fooling the alert Germans, who had orders not to let any Jews re-enter the German-occupied sections. So that in the end only a small number of Jews —to their own ultimate and horrible undoing —got back to their old homes.

AFTER a few brief days of work the German commissions left rather abruptly. That was when the Soviet authorities stepped in and began their campaign to persuade the refugees to accept Soviet passports. As a first measure all Polish citizens were declared officially Soviet nationals.

Now in Soviet Russia, the lack of a passport is a legal offense and the usual punishment is the deprivation of all rights and deportation to Siberia. The result of imposing Soviet nationality on the refugee Poles was that anyone who refused to accept a Soviet passport became automatically a criminal and thus subject to exile. But even when faced with this fate, the Poles as a rule refused to accept Soviet citizenship and preferred deportation. This included the great majority of the Polish Jews, although acceptance would have enabled them to remain within the borders of former Poland—true, not in the large cities, for which, in Soviet Russia, one needed a special permit, but in the villages and small towns. To a few Jews this seemed the better choice; though they too regarded Soviet life as a perpetual slavery, they hoped that the end of the war might bring a change for the better. The majority, however, refused Soviet passports and were deported by the thousands.

This particular mass deportation was the third consecutive one in a series of three: the first two, almost immediately after the Soviet occupation, had swept up high-ranking Polish officials, prominent liberals, and most of the landowners, merchants, aristocrats, and high clergy, as well as professional men of all kinds and some military men, although many of these latter had succeeded in escaping to Hungary and Rumania or finding hiding places in the forests; and also large numbers of well-to-do peasants and minor government employees, such as foresters, gardeners, and the like.

AS IS not unusual with Soviet enterprises, the deportations were not carried out in an orderly or consistent manner. There were many mistakes, contradictory orders, ar much confusion, some of it—as we found later—quite deliberate on the part c authorities.

While our documents were ' amined just before the train le passport was discovered amor

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ones. It belonged to a young Jew, a ruddy, freckled, kind-faced man, a shoemaker by trade. He was weeping and, when asked why he was with the deportees since he had a Russian passport, he replied that he wanted to go to Siberia because while he was away from home at work he had heard that his wife was being deported. He had not found her at home and he said that the Soviet officials at the station had told him that his wife had already left and that he would be able to join her in exile. He had been married only three months, he had waited seven years for his wife, and he simply could not live without her. We made room for Nukhim and he remained with us. Sixteen days later, when we arrived at our destination, Nukhim found that his wife wasn't there. A little later he was informed that she had never been sent out of Poland at all. All his pitiful entreaties to be allowed to return to Poland were of no avail. He had to remain in exile and his good Soviet passport was confiscated by the authorities with accompanying mockery. Although he was a good artisan, with a trade much needed in the locality, he had to go to work with the rest of us as a lumberjack.

Families were frequently separated, either through carelessness or on purpose, and the tragedies that followed were heart-rending. When the deportation first began, late in June, only single men were arrested, and a rumor spread that women, old men, and children were safe from deportation. Because of this, many married men, feeling reasonably secure about their families, left them all their belongings and ready cash and went into hiding. Then, very suddenly, just those women, old men, and children began to be deported, and in large numbers. On hearing of this, their fathers, brothers, and husbands came out of hiding and rushed to the trains. There they were summarily arrested and deported, but not—as they had hoped—together with their families. In many cases they never saw their families again.

One such family man, a Jewish merchant, was in our car. He wore a summer suit and his whole luggage consisted of a leather briefcase with a towel, shaving gear, a piece of soap, and one change of underwear. While he was hiding in the house of a business friend, his wife and two children, a son and daughter in their teens, had been taken away. When he came running to the station to look for them, he was told by the Russians to get into our train—and that was that. A burly, strong man, with a thoughtful, intelligent face, he was the first among us to feel real misgivings. Somehow he realized that the assurances flung so curtly by the Soviet officials that families would be reunited at their places of destination were all false. At first he sat quietly on his briefcase, without exchanging a word with anyone. Once in a while he held his head between his hands and groaned softly. Only later did he lose his composure.

LIKE so many other prisoners' cars, ours was an ordinary freight car equipped with a row of double-decker wooden bunks along each side, the corridor in the middle being reserved for our luggage and four extra persons. Each car had to accommodate thirty-two people altogether, and there were fifty cars in the train. A hole in the middle provided the common toilet. Each bunk was occupied by two prisoners. The first forty-eight hours of our voyage we were given no food at all; after that some thin gruel and bread were distributed once every twenty-four hours, usually at night. The majority of the prisoners in our car were Jews, some well-to-do and middle-class people, but for the most part poor working people. None of us knew where we were going or how long it would take, and soon our feelings of uncertainty and fear, now reinforced by the appalling conditions of travel, began to have a physical effect. Several persons became ill. One woman had a hemorrhage, and when we approached the Soviet doctor who accompanied the train, asking him to take her to a hospital in the nearest town, he answered: "Don't bother so much about your security and your health. You have lived all your life sucking poor people's blood; now you will live on your own fat." His prophecy

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turned out to be quite true, for most of us lost from thirty to fifty pounds while in exile. When I left Russia I weighed eighty-four pounds, less than two-thirds of my normal weight.

After we had crossed the Polish-Soviet border, and as we got closer to our final destination, regulations were slowly relaxed. We were allowed to get out at stops and buy articles and food at the station buffets. On the second or third day of the journey, as our train was rolling along slowly, another train caught up with us on the track alongside. It was a prisoners' train like ours, full of Poles. Seeing this, Nukhim, the young shoemaker, usually quiet and self-effacing, pressed close to the barred window and began to cry in a forlorn voice: "Lalcia, my Lalcia! This is Nukhim! Answer me!" From then on he did this whenever another train passed us, calling dismally to the blurred faces in the barred windows of the passing cars. Soon the strong, self-contained merchant began to do the same. Every time a prisoners' train passed alongside us he too ran towards the small window and shouted out the names of his wife and children. Sometimes his desperate calls infected us and we would join in and call out their names with him. Then the train would finally pass, the shouts and cries would die down, and the merchant would return to his corner and his quiet despair.

One day in the second week of the journey the train stopped at a little station—already inside Siberia—and presently another train came in and stopped on the next siding. Then one of those things happened that make you believe in miracles. For in the second train our merchant found his wife and children. They met on the track, crying and joyfully embracing each other, and many of us, crowding around, were moved almost as much as they at the sight of their happiness. But guards came running up almost immediately and ordered us to disperse. Crying, pleading, imploring did not help. The guards had only one answer: "You will find each other at the place of your destination." This, of course, was a barefaced lie. The merchant was sent much farther into Siberia, into a different region entirely, and when, after many weeks, he succeeded, through correspondence with relatives in Lvov, in discovering the whereabouts of his family, he found that his son had been separated from his mother and sent out to do field work, while mother and daughter went to a lumbering camp.

On the sixteenth day of the journey, our train reached a town on a river in far Siberia. Here we were transferred into barges, taken up the river, and two days later disembarked at a big camp near the forest in which we were to work.

The barracks in which I was placed had one door at one end and two small windows, high up under the roof. It was very dark. Along its entire length ran three rows of bunks, side by side, so that only one narrow corridor in the middle was left free for passage. While inside we could only lie or sit on the bare board twenty-one inches wide that was allotted to each of us. The place had no stove or any kind of furniture. There were married couples without children, single women, mothers with daughters, and a few couples with small children. All who could carry a big saw or an ax were sent out into the forest to fell trees. A few young boys were selected for field work farther away.

To reach the forest we had to walk about a mile and a quarter. The average daily pay bought about two and a quarter pounds of black bread. Pay was increased only if one could exceed the quota, a feat out of the question for most of us. At the commissary we were given tea with sugar twice a day, and once a day some *kasha* or a thin soup, and once in a great while some potato with fat or a piece of meat. Most of the women, including myself, earned only enough for a little over a pound of bread. At first those of us who had brought some money with us bought additional food in the local canteen: marmalade, a piece of herring, or canned food. The local natives also traded there; we had to stand in long lines and there were frequent quarrels. The food parcels that we

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were permitted to receive from home literally saved our lives. Many who did not receive parcels and had no money with which to buy food became gravely ill. But all of us suffered from malnutrition; we lost our teeth, became victims of night blindness (nyctalopia), boils, and various eruptions. Many also had frozen feet and hands. Accidents and injuries from falling trees were frequent.

With physical deterioration, moral depression followed very rapidly. We began to understand that we had been sent out here because we had come with ideas of freedom from a world hated by the Bolsheviks. The general feeling of gloom and hopelessness was accentuated all the more by the few individuals who somehow managed to retain their humor and hope and who could impart a measure of it to the others. There was an old Jewish woman called Estera in our camp. She was past seventy, still plump and strong, with a face like an old wrinkled apple and black eyes that were lively and young. She spoke excellent Polish, full of folk idioms, proverbs, and sayings, and remembered many a tale with which to amuse us in the evenings. Her laughter was gay and young, and she laughed a great deal.

ESTERA, together with her seventy-five-year-old husband, had been deported from Eastern Poland, where they had been staying with her sister after fleeing from the Nazis. Her husband was an excellent cabinetmaker. As a young man he had spent several years in America. On a visit to Poland which was supposed to have lasted merely a few weeks, he fell in love with Estera, then eighteen, and remained for good because she didn't want to leave Poland. They had had a happy life, many children and grandchildren. Perhaps it was her happy past that gave Estera the courage to talk to the authorities as she did, arguing with them with a good deal of humor and complete dignity.

One evening she was called to the commandant, and returned vastly amused. "Do you know what he wanted to know?" she told me. "He said that since we were working people we probably had been quite poor because Poland was a 'land of *pans*.'* You know what I answered? 'Why,' I said, 'we had three houses, all from the profits of our work. Only part of that was paid for with the money my husband brought from America. The rest came from our earnings. Because you see, Pan Soviet, in Poland good work was well paid for. Even the parish priest ordered his furniture from us. No skilled worker in Poland had to count his bread by the gram as you do here in Russia.'" She laughed loudly as she told us this.

But Soviet authorities don't like to be criticized. Shortly after that Estera and her husband were summarily transferred to another camp (frequent transfers were part of the system by which the prisoners were constantly harassed and worn down). This was very hard on old people who had not the strength to carry their belongings. For Estera and her husband it amounted to a catastrophe. Very frequently, not only private possessions such as clothes and cooking utensils had to be taken along, but even the boards of one's bunk, because the next camp was likely to have no bunk boards or only old ones infested with bedbugs.

We saw Estera again several months later and this time she was neither healthy nor gay. Her feet were swollen and she could not leave her bunk. Her husband was very ill. When she finally managed to leave the bunk to go to the commandant to ask if they could call a doctor—since neither could walk the several miles to the nearest hospital through the woods and heavy snow—he refused. Estera could not understand this refusal. She offered all kinds of arguments to prove that she had the right to demand a physician. The commandant kept silent. When in desperation she finally lost her temper and shouted: "Well, what will happen, Mr. Commandant?" his impassive face twitched lightly and a mean smile crooked his face. With his foot shod in a high military boot, he kicked the ground with all his

Pan in Polish stands for both "master" and "mister." Thus "land of *pans*" means literally "land of masters," but "*Pan* Soviet" means "Mr. Soviet."

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strength: "What will happen?" he yelled. "Here, under this ice, we shall bury you and your husband! There's enough room for all of you here!"

As she told me of this conversation she cried bitterly—the same Estera who a few months ago had thought that tears and complaints were signs of cowardice.

Estera and her husband were buried under the ice as the commandant had predicted: the old man at the end of winter, Estera in the spring. When the former died the ground was so hard that we could not dig a grave. For three days we kept a fire over one spot until at last we could break through the frozen earth.

As the winter wore on some other prisoners died too, younger and stronger than Estera and her husband. The cold was extreme, sometimes as low as eighty below zero, and we all suffered from malnutrition and inadequate clothing. The only store in the settlement seldom sold anything worthwhile. It was a shed divided into two parts: one for food, the other for general merchandise. In the latter only fans and musical instruments were always available; all other goods were sold out on the day they arrived. Queues were long and physical endurance alone enabled one to buy something on occasion, since no one knew in advance when or what goods would come in. Once I asked for shoelaces but was told that one of the two saleswomen had just had a baby and that I would have to wait two weeks until she returned to work. The other shop saleswoman was unable to sell me the shoelaces because the pregnant one had had no time to make an inventory before going to the hospital.

Almost worse than all the physical suffering, however, was the feeling of being doomed, the terrible uncertainty about the future, the complete isolation from the outer world, and the cold and mocking contempt with which the camp authorities treated us. Even the Polish Communists among us—there were a few young Jews who had been ardent Communists back home—were treated the same way. One of them, an educated young clerk full of Marxism, who tried to persuade the commandant that his ideology entitled him to some special treatment, was told brusquely: "I don't know you. Since the local authorities decided that you had to be sentenced to a labor camp, they probably knew what they were doing."

The reputed relaxation of religious intolerance was also a fable—at least in the camps and at that period. All Jews, including the most orthodox, had to work on Saturdays and on other Jewish holidays. They were forbidden to congregate for prayer in spite of a petition. For months they bore all this patiently; then came the Day of Atonement and their pent-up bitterness flared out in a cry of lament, despair, and, finally, in indignant revolt.

In our barracks about four-fifths of the prisoners were Jews, the rest Gentile Poles. Returning from work in the woods at sundown of the eve of Yom Kippur, the prisoners tried to get themselves clean, a terribly difficult thing to do with but two chipped bowls for the entire crowd. Although it was still autumn, in this far northern climate we had already had our first frost, and had just been given a small iron stove by the authorities. But it was so cold that the water in the bowls quickly froze over. Because the one narrow passage in the center of the barracks was usually full of luggage, sacks, and various odds and ends, it was hard to keep clean, especially as many of us worked on night shifts, and day and night we tracked dirt in from the outside.

Ordinarily, this state of affairs was accepted as inevitable. On this night, however, we all tried to sit quietly on our bunks while some of the women scrubbed the dirty floor of the passage and covered it with pine boughs. Dusk came early and in a spirit of calm, amid prayers, the people lighted candles for the souls of the dead. Small babies were hushed by their mothers and there came a moment when we all felt united with the God who is one to all believers and to whom we prayed on that night with all the strength of our hearts, our longing, and our undefeated hope.

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Suddenly the door of the barracks opened and the two NKVD officials in charge of the camp walked in. The ranking officer had Kalmuck features, the other was a pale-faced, blond Russian with blue eyes. Both were young, dressed in elegant uniforms, high boots, fur caps, leather jackets, with revolvers strapped to their belts.

"What's going on in here?" asked the older one in a sharp voice. "What are these candles for? What does it all mean?"

THERE was complete silence.

He began to question individual prisoners, stopping before those who held candles in front of them. The prisoner would either keep silent or shrink back, expecting a blow. Some held their hands in front of their candles, as if shielding them from the Russian. He went from person to person, asking the same question, and his voice grew louder and sharper, and finally it rose to a shout as he stopped in front of one young Jew. A skilled worker from Warsaw, he was very popular among us, for he was always calm and serene, helpful to others and full of quiet courage. He had got married a day before his deportation and was here with his young wife, worrying over her a great deal, for she was frail and the work in the forest was too hard for her. When the NKVD man stopped in front of his bunk, the young man rose to his feet and for a moment they both stood there silently, face to face.

"This candle," said the young Jew in a strong voice, "is burning for the soul of my father. All the candles you see here are burning for the souls of our dead. This was so decreed by our Lord God who is Everlasting and we are fulfilling his commandment by fasting and praying on this Day of Atonement."

There was complete quiet and we heard only the beating of our hearts. The officer stepped back a pace and stood without motion. Then he burst into harsh laughter and, with the help of his companion, began knocking over the candles. "We have no holiday tomorrow. Everybody must go to work!"

They left and the barracks was plunged into gloom. All of us broke down, Gentile and Jew alike, and cried in helpless anger.

ON THE following morning, while it was still dark, the NKVD men came back to see that the order to work was carried out. All of us refused, some shyly, others very firmly. The latter were sent out immediately to the police station, where they were held in a special unheated detention hut. Some of the more timid of us then gave in and went to work. Wives began to implore husbands to do the same; others, on the contrary, encouraged their men to resist the order. The NKVD threatened us with trial and imprisonment. In the meantime all the men already in the detention hut began to pray in unison, turning the place into a synagogue. The infuriated Soviet commandant tried to stop them, but they continued to pray. Those who went to work refused food all day and many fainted from lack of strength.

On the Gentile Poles in the camp there descended a mood of great depression verging on despair. These Catholics, who numbered only a few dozen against hundreds of Jews, felt almost equally insulted and morally degraded by the indignity received. We all now prayed secretly, feeling with a great and sudden insight that, defenseless and betrayed as we were, and thousands of miles from home, we had no hope and no recourse but God.

At night when prisoners returned from their work in the forest, all the arrested men were freed. A few weeks later a Soviet judge arrived at the camp. He had a Kalmuck face and, like most Soviet judges, no proper legal training. A mass trial of those who had refused to go to work was held the same night. A few of the prisoners were sentenced to four months of prison; the rest had their pay reduced for six months. For many this meant sickness, for some even death.

One evening of full moon around that time the oldest Jew in the camp, a gaunt man with a white and flowing beard, called his youngest relative and both went outside

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to pray. Two of this man's sons had been sentenced to prison and he had not heard from them since. In his black long *kapote,* he stood in the white snow under the magnificent polar sky, which blinked with myriads of stars, and holding up his arms, he prayed.

I stood near the door of the barrack and saw his return: he looked frozen; icicles were hanging from his white beard, but a smile illumined his face and he seemed confident and consoled. He stopped near me and said: "We must have confidence; we must not despair. For God has just come to me and said that one night he will lead us out of this country of slaves."

I listened in disbelief, yet strangely moved. Soon after, the old man died.

TOWARDS the end of the summer of 1941 I fell ill. I had a high fever that lasted a long time. Finally I was taken to the hospital in the neighboring town. This evoked general envy. A hospital in Soviet Russia is the only place where you can be sure of some food, where you get a bed, and where they leave you alone. Since everybody, all who are ill and even some who are not, dreams of getting into a hospital, Soviet physicians have to be very careful about admissions. If a doctor admits a "well" person, he becomes personally responsible for his mistake and ends up as a prisoner himself. To be admitted to a hospital, you have to have a temperature of at least 102 degrees. Where we were, the little primitive wooden hospital of eight beds, with a maternity ward, one physician, and several nurses, was an institution that commanded respect. To me it was the one truly commendable result of the Bolshevik Revolution.

At the time I was sent there the hospital was practically empty and I was the only patient in the women's section. In the men's ward was a young Jewish boy who had been deported together with his grandfather. The grandfather wore a black caftan and had a white beard with *peyes.* His grandson was terribly thin, frail, stooped, and racked by a constant cough. After I had improved a bit, he came over to ask me how I felt. We got acquainted and he asked me for some books. The only thing I had with me was Plato's *Symposium* in a Polish translation. I gave it to him, rather doubtful of its reception, but his eyes lit up at the sight of it. He said he knew it but would love to re-read it. He told me he should like to learn Greek, for "You will admit, madam," he said, "that the Greeks created the form of democracy as the Jews created the faith in one single God."

HE HAD studied in a rabbinical school and was crammed with knowledge for one so young. He knew English quite well and told me that he had even tried to read some Shakespeare, but his passionate interest was religion and psychology. He hated Karl Marx and the Bolsheviks. "This system which excludes the existence of God cannot exist or grow. Bolsheviks deprived people of God without giving them anything in exchange. Their equality is a fiction; their freedom is slavery—and their brotherhood? Why, here every man is afraid of the next man, he is afraid to talk to him." He paused. "And yet now, in this place, I feel the presence of God more than at any other time in my life. And this feeling is the only thing that they cannot take away from me."

I asked him what he thought of the Jewish problem in Russia. "In Russia the Jewish problem doesn't exist," he replied. "That is because in Russia Jews as such don't exist. When I used to pray in Poland on some Jewish holiday, I felt that on that same day a Jew in England, Germany, or America was worshiping the same way I did. Jewish faith and culture persisted all over the world in spite of this dispersion and this was our true link. I don't believe much in Palestine. Palestine is small and uncertain. But I do believe in the power of faith and of Jewish culture. An American Jew serves his country well, yet he retains his faith, he remains a Jew. But in Russia? The Jew in Russia is deprived of his faith; he can celebrate only the revolutionary holidays. He eats what the rest of them eat or whatever he finds in a store. My grandfather, who ate all his life

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according to our Orthodox religion, now lives on bread and water. Jews who marry Russians have children who are Jewish no longer. All this appeals to the dreamy idealism of a small group of assimilated European Jewish intelligentsia and this is the reason for their cult of Communism and their belief that only Russia offers a heaven for Jews. But to me, in this general and forced assimilation of Jewry lies their very ruin."

His eyes shone feverishly and his hands tightened into fists: "For us Jews Russia is a place where we lose our faith and our souls."

ONE evening early in August, shortly after getting out of the hospital, I had returned to the barracks from the forest, exhausted by work and the excessive heat. A neighbor brought me a cup of hot water and a small saucer of berries that she had gathered in the woods, and we sat down outside the door to rest. It was quiet in the forest, the heat of the day had begun gradually to subside, and I was engulfed as usual in a kind of resigned stupor. Then I noticed a young Jewish boy emerge from among the trees. He had been sent to the nearest settlement earlier in the day because of severe abdominal pains. As he came closer we saw him waving his arms; then we heard him laughing and shouting. We had had no newspapers for some days and I thought fleetingly, "Probably some victory over the Germans," and returned to my apathy. Victory in the faraway West was an empty term in our kind of existence; it had no longer the power to move us or to dispel the hopeless gloom.

The boy was now quite close. He had a newspaper in his hand and was pointing to it and shouting. Some other prisoners, closer to him than we, began to run towards him. Suddenly in the clamor of voices I discerned the words "We are free!" Then I heard the word *"Amnestja! Amnestja!"* They were all shouting together, laughing and crying, the small rag of news sheet being torn from hand to hand. I got up trembling and went closer. And then I too saw the few terse printed words that proclaimed the gift of freedom.

The door of the commandant's office opened suddenly and he stepped out:

"Stop this noise!"

We quieted down. He approached the boy with his gliding, cat-like step and tore the newspaper from his hand: "I told you not to bring any paper from town!" he shouted.

"But the amnesty—" someone in the crowd replied.

"What d'you think this is? A club? Return to the barracks and go to sleep!"

We obeyed. But we could not sleep. In the eery, unearthly light of the Siberian summer night we gathered in knots in the corners of our barracks and discussed in whispers the momentous but as yet incomplete news. Who was going to be freed? Did the amnesty apply to all Polish prisoners? Or only some? How did it happen? Would we be really free to leave Russia? And where would we go from there?

Late that night a young Polish engineer walked into our barracks; he was smiling and said in a loud voice: "They've called our commandants to the village. Something must be going on. We're here alone." The excitement rose. We passed freely among the various barracks, talking.

The following day was a Sunday. Our commandant returned from the village, together with a political supervisor. He sat down on the ground and told us about the agreement between General Sikorski and Stalin. This time we knew for certain that we would be free.

We had to work for two more weeks. Then the Russians announced that we could leave.

NOT everyone was able to leave: it was necessary to have money for railroad tickets and for food during the journey. But even for those of us who could leave, it was a terrible journey. We went to the south, for the rumor had spread that we would find there a renascent Polish Army being organized under General Anders in accordance with the treaty. But before we reached our

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destination, we were diverted to work on collective farms, in factories, and on road-building gangs; I spent half a year picking cotton under conditions reminiscent of scenes in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Hunger, lice, and epidemic disease followed us faithfully—in fact, the highest rate of mortality occurred just during these last disastrous months before we were allowed to go to Persia. But that is another sad story. . . .

When at last we reached the place where the Polish Army was being organized, three other prisoners and I rented a room from some local Uzbeks. The house was made of mud and had no furniture. We slept on improvised beds made of blankets, our bags under our heads.

In the yard of this establishment there lived some other people: Tartars, Uzbeks, and Russians. To my surprise they seemed to get along together quite well, without much quarrelling. At first they were suspicious of us Poles but in time accepted us in a friendly manner. I made friends with a cat and, later, with its owner, a charming little girl of nine, the daughter of the Russian neighbor. When I gave the child a white silk ribbon for her hair her mother came to thank me and exchanged a few careful words. There were no men left in her family: two had gone to the war, two were in prison. The woman never explained why or for how long. These were subjects of a sort Russians never discussed.

THE room next to ours was occupied by a Jewish family: an old couple and two adult daughters, both red-headed, sullen and ugly. Their father was very ill and never left his bed; their mother, gray-haired, prematurely old, and very thin, moved about like a shadow. They were refugees from the Ukraine. One day the old mother asked me for a needle. She knew that I had some still from Poland, and explained that she had had none for a year, for no needles were to be had in that district. I brought the needle over that night. The room was much like ours, except for the old man's bed in the corner. The women slept on blankets in the other corner. Under the window there stood a table made of plain planks and two wooden benches. I found the old woman in tears. Her husband was worse, and her daughters were not at home.

I tried to comfort her and then, rather suddenly, the woman broke down and began to complain. (Incidentally, neither complaints nor comforting are normal human manifestations in Soviet Russia, where everyone strictly minds his own business.) "My husband," she said, "was a merchant in the days of the Czar. We were well off in spite of anti-Semitism. Now, you can see, we live like dogs. Even our religion they took away from us. It used to be I lit candles on Friday and we celebrated all the Jewish holidays; there was a lot to eat and to drink and we always had enough clothes. My daughters are Communists, party members, so I can't complain to them. If I do, all I hear is that I am a stuffy *burzhuika*. And they are no longer Jewish, my daughters. One is marrying a Ukrainian, the other doesn't know a thing about our faith. Only I alone can speak quietly with our God. But sometimes I doubt if he hears me from here."

"On the other hand they haven't any anti-Semitism here," I said.

"Don't you believe it, *Pani*." She spoke in a passionate whisper. "They have severe punishment for anti-Semitism, so the people try to conceal it and sit tight. Here they don't even allow the word 'Jew,' because, they say, it is offensive. But they hate us as they always did. I feel this."

As I left the room in the murky dark someone grabbed me by my hand. I screamed, "Who is it?" It was only the little Russian girl. In the dim shadows I recognized the white ribbon I had given her.

"Don't go there!" the child said fiercely under her breath. "You probably don't know. They're Jews!" Then she vanished in the dark. I stood for a moment in the doorway. It was quiet. In this far alien sky the stars winked coldly. Shivering, I returned to my room.

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ISRAEL AND THE PRIVATE INVESTOR

A New Land of Business Opportunity?

HAL LEHRMAN

TWO years ago this spring, when the Economic Department of the Jewish Agency put out its New York shingle, a flood of prospectors poured up the high brownstone stoop and into the reconverted corridors of the Agency's archaic mansion on a sedate street in the East 60's. Israel, then less than twelve months old, had just won its war against the Arabs. The new state glowed with the rosy promise of a bimillennial dream come true. The Agency—and the Israeli consulate, in another mansion four blocks to the north—were overrun by eager applicants for aid and information on investment in Israel.

For a while it seemed like a Jewish Klondike, at least in the talking stage. In the beginning, around 1,500 prospective investors had thronged through Agency headquarters monthly, each with an urgent inquiry or a zealous proposal. But scarcely a year later the premises wore the quiet look of a conservative investment banking house, its staff conversing politely with a few choice prospects gleaned from perhaps 150 queries a month.

Of course, investment ideas sometimes take unconscionably long to mature into final transactions. Moreover, not all of that first crop of would-be pioneers had been bona fide investors. Some were get-rich-quickers, some had plans which required quieter times and a more stable economy, others lacked minimal capital, and still others any clear notion of what they were looking for or were up against, vaguely expecting that the Agency or somebody else might be happy to finance them in exchange for a bright idea.

But there was also a substantial amount of sober money, searching for a place in Israel to settle—better than 50 million dollars in the first ten months of inquiry to the Agency alone. There were respectable sums involved, too, in the projects or questionnaires submitted to Israeli consulates in the United States and other free-enterprise countries, or even carried directly to Israel in the pockets of tourists surveying investment possibilities. Money was available, but it was not flowering into blueprints and contracts at the anticipated rate. Something seemed decidedly wrong.

IN ISRAEL, it took the authorities a certain time to concede this unpleasant possibility, even to themselves. To begin with, they had really had no substantial prior experience with anyone but *immigrant* investors; non-immigrant capital under the Mandate had been largely channeled through overseas Jewish organizations like the Palestine Economic Corporation (PEC) in the United States, the Palestine Corporation in Britain, and various South African groups. In addition, the nerve-wracked administration was nearly engulfed by the flood of population pouring into the country, awesomely complicating the already complex dilemmas of the new community.

Still it must be stated that the sluggishness of official Israel's comprehension of the investment problem was materially thickened by her widespread belief that world Jewry would compete for the sheer privilege of investing in the state's future. Enormous quantities of "flight capital," it was fondly thought, would seek a safe Israeli refuge—even from

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HAL LEHRMAN, author and lecturer, here continues his discussion of the economic problems of Israel, begun in his article "A Billion Dollars for Israel" in the December 1950 COMMENTARY. He now analyzes a central aim of present-day Israeli economic policy—the attraction of private investment from abroad, chiefly America. In this, the first of two articles on the subject, Mr. Lehrman considers some of the economic hazards, international and domestic, that have up to now limited private foreign investment. His second article will discuss alleged administrative inefficiency, "socialistic" controls, excessive Histadrut influence, and similar reported deterrents to overseas investors. Mr. Lehrman's numerous previous articles in COMMENTARY are familiar to all who are concerned with developments in the Jewish state.

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America, which could not forever be immune to the virus of anti-Semitism. Many Israelis—who would have known better if they had known the United States better—were quite sure that affluent American Jews were going to leap at the chance to acquire an "insurance policy."

Some rare Israelis did not altogether subscribe to this curiously half-anguished, half-complacent theory that the United States, like Europe before it, must eventually and inevitably succumb to the universal march of illiberalism. But they, too, counted on heavy American investment, basing their comfortable estimates on the proved philanthropic devotion of America to the idea of a National Home. If Americans were so generous with gifts, why might one not expect even more lavish investments for profit? It was not foreseen that anything so vulgar as a preoccupation with costs and percentages would jaundice the American Jew's eyes when he looked upon Israel as a business proposition rather than an object of charity.

When the deluge of American private-investment dollars failed to descend, the first impulse in Israel was to blame the potential investor. It was insinuated that, if a man failed to invest after talking big about his intentions, he had quit solely because the Israeli authorities would not tolerate the excessive profits he demanded. Or that his big talk had been mainly to store up prestige in his community back home, while also giving himself an alibi for reducing his next contribution to the United Jewish Appeal.

Such explanations may sometimes have been justified—but they did nothing to mitigate the urgent need for foreign capital. Israeli factories were slowing down, even closing, for lack of funds with which to purchase raw materials abroad, while the disastrous gap between essential imports and currency-earning exports was widening.

By late 1949, cautious admission that Israel might have missed the first investment boat began to creep into official utterances and writings. Recognition grew that investors were not just contributors in disguise, after all; and that if the terms offered them were not bringing adequate response, the terms had better be made more attractive. This realization led very slowly but nonetheless perceptibly to a greater measure of flexibility on the part of Israeli agencies in contact with investors. A pattern of concessions and standard allowances to foreign capital gradually emerged; first on an individual bargaining level, then—thanks to increasing Israeli realization of the similarity in the approach of serious investors—as a general pattern, and finally after passage by the Knesset last March, as a formally codified Law for the Encouragement of Capital Investments.

By general consensus, the new law—and the Investment Center which it set up for the consideration, expediting, and authorization of projects—might have enormously improved the capital assets of the Israeli economy twelve or eighteen months earlier. But in 1950 the results were disappointing. So disappointing, in fact, that further concessions were hastily announced before the year's end. These additional lures to reluctant investors have also, by and large, done little to precipitate the required gold rush.

What are the conditions and facilities now being offered to foreign capital? What types of project are being established? How much are they worth in terms of hard currency and of utility to the economy? What more and what kind can Israel usefully absorb? Why has the necessary influx of investment not occurred despite the large concessions and larger need? The present study proposes to examine the evidence and search for answers and conclusions—answers and conclusions that, unfortunately, are sometimes varied and conflicting. For, in the "scientific" treatment of economic maladies, there are often as many schools and prescriptions as there are doctors.

The Law for the Encouragement of Capital Investments stressed Israel's desire to favor all enterprises—begun since the creation of the state or yet to be established—which would develop productive capacity, absorb immigrants, reduce imports, increase exports, spread the population usefully around the country, and spur the efficient exploitation of national resources and economic potential.

Investors contemplating risks in any foreign country normally wish to hear in advance from its government at least the terms under which their money may be brought in, what taxes they will be required to pay,

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and how much money they will be able to take out in a negotiable currency. This was precisely what the investment law tried to do—for enterprises which would meet the stated purposes of the law and be certified as "approved undertakings" by the official Investment Center, a clearing-house for all projects.

The law specified that capital could be imported into Israel as foreign currency, equipment, and supplies, with partial or total exemption from customs duties for apparatus, machinery, raw materials, building materials, and semi-finished goods not manufactured in Israel. Accelerated depreciation allowances, for tax purposes, would permit total amortization of plants within seven years. Costs of developmental research might be written off at a rate of 20 per cent annually. Taxes on all urban and industrial properties would be entirely waived for five years, on some types of property for ten years or more. For five years, also, no income from approved investment would be taxed in excess of 25 per cent; approved investors residing in Israel would pay no tax at all for seven years on income derived outside the country; foreign companies would be refunded their Israeli taxes above the deduction granted by their own government for such paid taxes. Foreigners residing in Israel could freely repatriate all uninvested foreign currency deposited in Israeli banks; foreigners settling in Israel would be absolved for seven years from any obligation to sell foreign currency to the Israeli government. As for recovery of foreign currency invested in approved undertakings, non-Israeli investors would be permitted to withdraw—in profit, interest, or amortization—up to 10 per cent annually of the maximum investment in the same currency as that originally invested.

These concessions—and other minor allowances granted in the investment law—were subsequently reinforced by a variety of further privileges announced in the cabinet and presumably to be enacted eventually—though not yet—as legislation.

Most widely publicized was a promise to raise by an unspecified (and apparently sliding) number of points the limit of 10 per cent set by the investment law on annual withdrawal of invested capital—provided that the enterprise so rewarded helped substantially to reduce Israel's foreign exchange shortage. Other concessions were designed to meet some, at least, of the numerous operational objections and demurrers advanced by potential investors who were holding off because their reactions even to the improved situation were still unfavorable.

The new dispensations offered the possibility of government loans, purchase of government land, priorities to overcome the bottleneck in the building of new plants. Others promised export bonuses to help meet world competition, preferential treatment on allocation of raw materials, and foreign exchange with which to buy them; authorized extra profits for reinvestment, permission to import non-essential goods as capital investment for lucrative local sale; outlined plans to cut down labor inefficiency, increase plant productivity, and streamline the bureaucracy with which exporters were grappling daily.

During this time new foreign enterprises, some dating back as nebulous projects to pre-investment law days, were burgeoning all over Israel's economic map. Each the result of separate negotiations, they together represent a complex range of organizational form, financing, combination, motivation, and usefulness. Some might conceivably have come to life without the stimulus of government favors. But it is reasonable to suppose that virtually every project must have been encouraged to become a fact by one or several of the concessions or promises listed above.

In coaxing capital from abroad, Israel was motivated by the long-range purposes of making jobs for immigrants, exploiting her natural resources, and achieving the other diverse objectives set forth in the preamble to the investment law. But the overriding purpose was to accumulate, earn, or conserve foreign exchange. If that tragically short commodity could be cornered and seized in sufficient quantity, the rest of Israel's towering economic problems would automatically move a long way toward solution. Accordingly, most new "undertakings" were "approved" mainly because of their immediate or potential contribution to the state's foreign currency holdings.

Paradoxically but quite obviously, the ac-

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tual overseas capital brought in by any project at the moment of investment was not by itself *the* important source of foreign exchange. The Israeli authorities wasted precious time before realizing this, but once they did they stopped demanding that a significant portion of investment be in cash. They were happy to see most or all of the capital arrive disguised as machinery and plant or production materials—unavailable in Israel and absolutely essential to start an enterprise which would then begin *earning* hard currency for the country.

A CLASSIC and highy desirable way to earn such currency is by collecting it on the spot. From tourists, for instance. At long last, Israel is beginning to build adequate hotels for the attraction and accommodation of dollar and sterling visitors. Hitherto the available hotels, apart from a few spectacular exceptions, have been little more than glorified boarding houses. Already the thousand extra beds in hotels built during 1950 have helped to increase the average tourist's stay in Israel to nineteen days. But with a 50 per cent rise in tourist traffic last year over 1949, the rooming crisis is more acute than ever. Encouraged by a government mortgage fund of 2 million Israeli pounds for hotel construction, blueprints are sprouting from Tiberias and Safed to Haifa, Nahariya, Nathanya, Herzlia, and Jerusalem. PEC and Ampal (American Palestine Trading Corporation) both have hotel projects in the Tel Aviv area. An American hotel man, Maxwell Abbell, has formed a group in partnership with an Israeli syndicate, Restaurant Centers, Ltd., to modernize six of the latter's hotels. If anything, the spurt in building may be slightly too enthusiastic about tourist comforts in contrast with the present hard life of the Israelis. A 200-room, air-conditioned Tel Aviv seaside palace now under construction will have a Miami opulence, with a 600-seat dining room, a 900-seat convention hall, a 1,500-seat café, shops, bars, travel agencies, a swimming pool, and a tunnel to the beach. There are even tourist camps being planned with swimming pools, theaters, and other uncamplike delights.

Tourism is an "invisible export." It trades services inside the country for dollars. But visible exports in the form of commodities for sale to hard currency areas, having a wider scope than the mere satisfaction of tourist body comforts, are a much vaster source of exchange. Such Israeli exports range from diamonds to oranges, fruit juices, artificial teeth, chocolate, woolen sweaters, medicines, and fertilizers. In this area of direct hard currency earning, one large prospect is potash. It is hoped that an 8-million-dollar expansion program of the Palestine Potash Company, partially financed by the American-directed PEC and the Export-Import Bank, will eventually produce potash worth 5 million dollars annually in foreign exchange.

Another combine in the chemical field illustrates a third way to "earn" foreign exchange—by producing more goods not for export but for local use, shrinking the need for imports and thereby *economizing* on expenditure of Israel's meager hard currency reserves. The new Fertilizers and Chemicals, Ltd.—composed of American-Israeli-South African corporate interests with Israeli government and Export-Import Bank aid—is expanding a plant for super-phosphates and nitrogenous fertilizers which, it is estimated, may save a yearly 10 million dollars which would otherwise have to be spent abroad to further the country's expanding agricultural program. Similarly, tires and tubes from the Akron, Ohio, General Tire Company's Israeli plant (capitalized at $2,800,000) will be absorbed by the Israeli market and preserve foreign exchange for purchase of other essential foreign commodities and raw materials. (Financing of a second such plant, involving the Dayton Tire Company in combination with Histadrut, is now under negotiation.)

Finally, production can save hard currency by exports to areas where Israel can trade them for needed goods on a barter basis—without using money at all. A 2½-million-dollar Kaiser-Frazer assembly plant at Haifa hopes to dispose of nine-tenths of its output through barter with soft-money countries for commodities Israel wants but lacks the currency to buy. The export goal for K-F cars and Mack trucks in 1951 is set at 15-20 million dollars, aimed at Finland, Norway, Turkey, Kenya, and other countries—even as far away as Latin America. Argentina, for example, is short of dollars to import K-F

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vehicles from Willow Run, but she does have plenty of meat, which Israel sorely requires, to import the same brand of automobiles from Haifa. In a barter agreement with Finland, Israel will throw in K-F vehicles along with alarm clocks, processed textiles, chemicals, and other "Made in Israel" goods for precious Finnish commodities like telephone poles, newsprint, cardboard, fishing boats, and prefabricated houses.

UNDOUBTEDLY, foreign investment activity in Israel has had a noticeable lift this past year. There are big deals like the million-dollar shoe factory established by American-Israeli investors with the know-how of the General Shoe Corporation of Nashville, Tennessee, and a contemplated paper mill, two-thirds of the capital for which is being subscribed by an American industrialist, PEC, an Italian paper manufacturer, and a Brazilian group. Facilitated by some American Jewish investment, Philco refrigerators and Admiral radios are being assembled in Israel, and United States Hoffman Machinery Corporation is issuing laundry machines (with the Israeli government netting some dollar credits on all three from gifts ordered by Americans for delivery inside Israel).

A *kibbutz* is launching a $70,000 screw factory with American-invested money; a $560,000 American-Israeli factory is making zippers. A partial list of products from new or contemplated enterprises sparked by American capital includes pencils and school supplies, pharmaceuticals, electrical appliances, concrete walls, cutlery, optical equipment, crushed stone, plastics, dresses, T-shirts, cotton underwear, tools, dies, and pipe fittings. Swiss investors are backing a watch factory at Ramat Gan, a housing development for some 400 new families at Nathanya, and a Quaker Oats plant at Rehovot. Jews from France have planned a marble works, a film laboratory, and a winery; Jews from Poland, a leather goods factory. Italians have enterprises for building materials, automobile repair, and alcohol. British are investing in telephone and electromotor plants, South Africans in knitting and weaving, Canadians in plastics, fodder, and rental of cars to tourists.

Ampal, with close Histadrut connections in Israel, has some 17,000 individual investors in America. Its balance sheets show the sale of 11 million dollars in debentures to American Jews since Israel's emergence, for a total capitalization of 21 million dollars at the end of 1950. In that year alone, Ampal declares it placed over 10 million dollars in long-, medium-, and short-term credits at the disposal of the Israeli economy. PEC registers the sale of better than 3¼ million dollars in securities since 1948 (including some $400,000 from a merger with the Israel Corporation of America). Its *investments* operating in Israel last year are valued by PEC at 7½ million dollars, and it further reports firm commitments for another million and a half dollars soon to be put to work. And little investors, who in the beginning could find nowhere to put their $2,000 or $5,000 directly to work, can now buy and rent out a tiny house in Israel through the Jewish Agency's Rassco, or the Ampal-affiliated Shikhun, and other housing corporations.

Meanwhile, partly from these stimuli, the Israeli economy has shown greater productiveness. Electricity sales, an index to factory and machine activity, went up more than 25 per cent last year, cement production over 50 per cent. Gross industrial output for 1950 is estimated at 420 million dollars against 336 millions for 1949. Exports of finished goods have nearly doubled.

ISRAELI economic statistics—like official statistics in many other countries—tend to be vague, and suggest hopeful or desperate conclusions depending on which emotions the statisticians wish to arouse. The fact-finding and fact-compiling techniques of the new state are necessarily still far short of scientific precision. It would therefore be rash to offer any confident estimate here of total private foreign investment during the year since passage of the investment law. However, the latest official Israeli survey, dating back to mid-December, credits the Investment Center in the first six months of operation with having wholly "approved" 265 undertakings and "recommended" 71 others, the latter being eligible only for certain limited benefits of the law. These 331 enterprises—58 of them already in operation—represent a total capital of $100,800,000 (computed at the official rate), of which $51,800,000 has been or will be brought in from abroad, ex-

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clusive of the Export-Import loan, other foreign governmental credits, or small workshops established by immigrants. Better than 90 per cent of the new investment capital is for private enterprise, according to the survey. In the approved undertakings, $17,640,000 is of American origin, as contrasted with $25,480,000 from other foreign investors.

This official round-up leaves a few interesting questions unanswered. The proportion of Americans involved in the remaining $8,680,000 of non-Israeli capital, for the "recommended" undertakings, is not indicated. The figures do not show the number and aggregate capital of those approved or recommended enterprises which existed in plan or fact before the Center's own existence. Nor does the survey distinguish between capital invested and capital merely promised. In the new *Technion Yearbook* now in preparation, Bernard Nortman, an American economist for the Jewish Agency, attempts to fill some of these gaps. Using official estimates he reports that 8 million dollars had been invested by foreigners *and* Israelis in approved enterprises before the Center was established; 32 millions more had been put in by last October 31; an additional 19 millions "was expected" soon thereafter. With housing, agriculture, and everything else included, he then calculates total private investment for 1950 at 145 million dollars. Of this, Nortman says, 45 millions are from abroad. He estimates that "about one-third" of this is American.

WHETHER the total of private American capital is 15 million dollars just for 1950, as Nortman supposes, or some 17 millions or more for all authorized enterprises since creation of the state, as officially indicated, the point is worth stressing that the performance in either case may be regarded as remarkable. Remarkable, that is, in the light of traditional American apathy toward private overseas investment *anywhere*—except in oil-producing or mineral-rich underdeveloped regions. In all of the Marshall Plan countries, for example, private American capital transfers in 1949 only amounted to something under 35 million dollars. Private Americans have directly invested in *the whole world* since 1914 less than their *annual* expenditure on *domestic* plant in recent years.

There have been too many attractive investment prospects at home, and too many defaults and disasters abroad. From this point of view, the sums attracted to Israel may therefore be legitimately hailed as a tremendous achievement.

A kind of historical parallelism between Israel and 19th-century America has often been drawn which suggests that Israel is really no worse off than our own pioneers were. This analogy rests on the fact that the United States also was struggling with an annual trade deficit as late as 1875 and that foreign investors braved numerous risks to support our federal credit, land banks, communications, industries, and other improvements, thereby enabling us to import more than we exported and to absorb a large immigration precisely as Israel is doing today.

Unfortunately for this theory, the world economy in which Israel must sink or swim has grown noticeably bigger and rougher since 1789. And as for the analogy itself: early America had limitless land, food, and resources; its people could endure a markedly lower level of existence and mechanical culture; its economic structure and continued survival hardly owed so much to sheer philanthropy from foreign well-wishers. The latter item also diminishes the impressiveness of Israel's record in attracting more investment than other countries. No other country has enjoyed the scientific fund-raising techniques and the *élan* to induce investment for emotional rather than profit motives.

More chilling than any other cold reality, however, is the incontrovertible evidence that the investment total—no matter how good in contrast with elsewhere—is lamentably inadequate to Israel's needs in the here and now.

THANKS in some part to foreign investment, export of finished goods in 1950 may have swelled by better than half, but the increased total in exports of all kinds was barely visible —and the dollar value of imports per capita was still among the highest in the world. Gross industrial output last year is estimated considerably above 1949—but remains considerably below the 1950 goal stipulated in Israel's Four Year Plan. According to official claims, industrial production rose by 40 per cent and agricultural production by 75 per

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cent over 1947. Nevertheless, even taking into account that more Arabs have departed than Jews have arrived since then, the Jewish population—both more productive and more consuming than the Arab—increased by 81 per cent. Finance Minister Eliezer Kaplan has reported an 18 per cent *decline* in per capita output, largely because of the "lag of investments" behind the pace of immigration.

And, perhaps most significant of all, a drastic reversal has occurred in the ratio of investment to philanthropy: before World War II only around 15 per cent of the annual flow of capital to Palestine came from philanthropy, the remainder from immigrants and foreign investors. Some 300 millions of the 488 million dollars arriving in Palestine between 1922 and 1939 were brought by immigrants alone; but a major part of the new immigration has been close to penniless if not entirely destitute.

The deadly investment lag now tripping Israel is all the more obstructive because the Israeli economy seems almost made to order for quick expansion and flourishing enterprise. True, some observers doubt any real possibility for rapid and substantial increase of one's capital at this time by investment in Israel. They contend that such ambitious projects as Kaiser-Frazer and General Tire have been inspired not by an expectation of profits reasonably soon but by a desire to keep surplus capital busy establishing a Near Eastern foothold for possible but probably remote advantage. Yet, the fact remains that Israel has a hungry domestic market literally avid for goods.

INDEED, one trouble hitherto has been that investment has gone primarily into consumer-commodity production rather than into basic fields like the metals and machinery industries which can develop the country's productive sinews and export potential. But even consumer supply is pitifully inadequate to demand. It is possible for different investors to react differently to this situation—as did the two American shoe salesmen who, after discovering that African natives go barefoot, dashed back aboard their ship and radioed home, one saying NO SHOES NEEDED SITUATION HOPELESS AM RETURNING IMMEDIATELY, the other saying NO SHOES AVAILABLE MARKET WIDE OPEN RUSH MILLION PAIR. The record shows that nobody is going broke in Israel for want of cash customers. Some recent American investors even report solid profits in the very first months of their operations. Moreover, in this virgin territory one industry spurs another: it is not unreasonable to expect that, given sufficient capital, an enterprise like the Kaiser-Frazer plant could soon inspire local production of plastic and glass parts, upholstery, axles, and electrical equipment.

Actually, most new enterprises would need no foreign market for their Israeli production, because it could be easily absorbed on the spot. It is the Israeli government which rightly stresses exports, for hard currency and barter purposes. But here too it would seem that the exporter should have small difficulty in finding customers, thanks again to the appetite of the Israeli market. Foreign countries can find a buyer in Israel for anything they deliver; but for Israel to be able to pay, the other country must itself buy from Israel; therefore, if Israel produces more for export the foreign market is willing and waiting to absorb it—especially if, as is already being done, the Israeli exporter is aided by government subsidies or other favors to sell abroad at a cheap price.

Thus, at least on paper, there would seem to be ample opportunity to invest in enterprises producing for easy and profitable sale both inside Israel and abroad. Why has there been so niggardly a response to such an apparently attractive prospect?

CRITICAL analysts differ in their stress on priority of causes, but a general consensus may be adequately listed as follows:

(1) Investment funds, even of confirmed Zionists, have been frightened away by the Arab military threat to Israeli survival and by the larger menace of World World III.

(2) Productivity of the Israeli worker and plant is low, wages and other production costs are high, and the Israeli pound is officially pegged at a level far above its true value.

(3) Red tape and administrative inefficiency impede the handling of inquiries and discourage many prospective investors.

(4) Excessive controls on price, supply, imports, land, raw materials, and general operations are a further deterrent.

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(5) Potential private enterprise is dissuaded by an allegedly unfavorable climate in Israel toward private enterprise already existing there: the dominance of the labor federation (Histadrut) not only as a bargaining agent for labor but as a monopolist-owner in key sectors of the economy; the favored position and overbearing influence of Histadrut in government; the power of Histadrut to compete unfairly against established private enterprise and to obstruct new ventures.

(6) In view of all the above assorted hazards, most individuals willing to put venture capital into Israel regard the guarantees of the investment law and Investment Center as insufficient, and require further premiums and privileges in order to be enticed.

These are the major obstacles and complaints, expressed or implied, responsible for the present inadequate flow of American money. To what extent are the obstacles real and—where they are real—what is being done to reduce them?

NEAR EASTERN AND WORLD INSTABILITY: Arab-Israeli tension has momentarily slackened, but basic animosities are as virulent as ever. Frontier incidents continue, Arab Mediterranean and Suez Canal controls still hamper Israeli trade, and no great progress can be recorded toward agreement on the Palestine Arab refugees despite recent Arab League talk of studying their possible resettlement. It is doubtful whether any conciliatory attitude by Israel which did not amount to capitulation could assuage fundamental Arab enmity. And eventual invasion of tiny Israel by armies recruited from the surrounding vast Arab reservoir is a prospect not conducive to eager investment from overseas.

On the other hand, there is sound reason for believing that, if the Arabs were unable to conquer when Israel was weak in manpower and material, they would come off even worse in any "second round" against an Israel fortified by a large immigration, a new network of semi-military border and interior settlements, and an expanded, mobile citizen-army. Besides, capital investment in Israel would itself contribute to the security both of Israel and of the investment. The greater Israel's productiveness, the less probable a successful challenge from the Arabs, whose best ally in their long-range irredentism would be the bankruptcy of Israeli economy.

In the long run, peace or war in the Near East will be affected most by global circumstances. In the larger area of world politics, Israel obviously has even less power of influential decision than in the parochial eastern Mediterranean. Already the tightened United States export controls—and the possibility of export embargoes—have reportedly impeded the negotiation of certain projects for private investment in Israel. To cite only one instance, talks about a long-heralded Ford assembly plant have been suspended, among other reasons, because of Ford International's fear, according to company spokesmen, that American mobilization may pinch off equipment and materials for remote subsidiaries.

In these harassed times, the natural instinct of capital is to locate itself in safe and quickly accessible places, keep as liquid as possible, and avoid long-term immobility in far-off longitudes. Should World War III erupt, the dread possibility is anticipated that Israel, if not overrun, may be sorely pressed by shortages in shipping, industrial supplies, food, and dollars—or isolated entirely from Western aid. In a recent experiment by this writer privately to enlist support for a particular investment, he met total failure primarily because each prospect recoiled at the thought of sending his money abroad *anywhere* at this time.

Such prudence is not necessarily justified by the outlook or the precedents, at least not in Israel. If the next world war comes, it may be as different in geographical pattern as it certainly will be in tactics, but the fact remains that Palestine during the last world war enjoyed signal prosperity. Far from being isolated, it became a vital arsenal and production center for the Allies, and its economy duly soared. Again, if the present crisis with Soviet Russia fails to abate, Britain and the United States may well begin to act on the logistic utility of the Near East and, remembering Palestine's importance last time, launch a vast program to convert Israel into a producer for war that will wipe her economic dilemmas of the moment clean away. Britain's top Middle East commander on his recent "official visit" to Israel could

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hardly have overlooked the economic aspects of the area's defense. Such expansion is all the more practical because Israel's production potential is much larger now than in 1939. If this were to happen, private investment would pay bonanza dividends.

Moreover, even the uncertainty of sending money on long journeys diminishes in gravity when compared with the vaster uncertainties of a world engaged in total war. Who can say that money deposited in "safe" Latin America or even New York will survive the upheavals of an atomic contest between two worlds? With such a prospect, perhaps the "smartest" hedge would be to spread oneself out there and here, splitting the risk of all possible contingencies. This, however, is something each investor must decide for himself: there is nothing heaven or Israel can do to influence the choice.

PRODUCTIVITY: One descends from global strategy to Israeli-made problems, and the possibility of self-help in their solution, when considering the investment deterrents created by high costs. Of these, one of the most deep-rooted seems to be the feeble quotient of average man-hour and machine-hour productivity.

It is easy to exaggerate the inefficiency of Israeli labor. Under proper stimulus and supervision, according to some reports, there may be no more enthusiastic and energetic toiler anywhere than the Israeli worker, particularly that significant portion of the immigrant mass which is striving and straining for integration. I have, for instance, the irreproachable testimony of one American non-Jewish construction engineer that it cost no more to build the Sugarman shoe factory in Jerusalem than a paper-cup factory of identical size and design in Toronto: on blast excavation jobs it was cheaper and more efficient to use hand labor in Israel than bulldozers for similar projects in New York. Also, a false impression may be given by the understated production records of some manufacturers: because of price controls on the finished goods, it is asserted, they admit only to having produced the officially required minimum from the raw materials used—and they dispose of the remainder without invoice on the black market.

Even so, Israeli technicians concede that productivity under average Israeli conditions is poor. An authoritative (and courageous) survey in the Jerusalem *Post* last year, which has never been convincingly refuted, asserted that an increase of at least 50 per cent in annual industrial production could be obtained by improved methods of planning and operation.

The workers, it was charged, were "unenlightened" about the connection between the purchasing power of their wages and the national productivity. Many lacked respect for their jobs, machines, and materials, to say nothing of their employers and the ultimate consumer. They resisted new techniques, fearing to be made dispensable or to be required to work faster. The government was also blamed: high taxes dulled the incentive to earn more by increased production; profit had been officially fixed as a percentage of production cost, encouraging waste; import licenses for raw materials were issued sparingly, deterring manufacturers from speedier utilization of their stocks.

The chief culprit, however, seems to be management inertia. For a long time now, Israel has been a seller's paradise. Too many factory owners see no reason for change when antiquated methods have been bringing good returns for a decade. They are indifferent to the miracles of research and engineering. Most of them began with small workshops, and have never acquired the know-how or the personal stature for rational exploitation of their expanded plants. They operate by trial and error instead of consulting the specialists who are available. If the output is low, the squandering of time and material large, and the per-unit cost high, no matter—the public pays the extra price. Finally, obsolescent or worn-out machinery, poor ventilation, improper lighting, and other purely physical handicaps all contribute to the woeful skimpiness of Israel's output.

THESE deficiencies have been no secret to top levels in management, government, and labor. An important purpose of the foreign investment drive itself has been the modernizing of physical plant through replacements from abroad. The announced concessions on taxes and raw material allocations are partly intended to stimulate productivity, at least by "approved enterprises" of

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recent origin or expansion. Histadrut and the Manufacturers' Association have jointly sponsored a Productivity Research Institute for worker and management education, and the Association has set up an Engineering Department to raise its members' efficiency.

A particular effort has been made to acquaint workers with their payroll stake in increased production. Press and official publications give considerable space to articles on productivity. Foreign technicians have been imported for surveys and consultation, and others are expected once the American "Point Four" program gets under way. Workers, foremen, and managers have been sent on tour of model West European and American factories. (The Israelis are especially impressed by the American worker's systematic use of his tools, his pride in them, his interest in improving them, and his exclusion of political discussions, trade union debates, and other fascinating matters from the hours dedicated to the work bench.) The most ambitious device has been a system of labor-management work councils or committees in individual factories to attain higher production norms—accepted in principle both by Histadrut and the Manufacturers' Association—with individual pay bonuses for extra production and with mutual cooperation for greater efficiency.

Undoubtedly, this concentration on better method has obtained benefits in details. Uncollated figures show that in one Histadrut-owned factory productivity went up 40 per cent in six months; in one privately owned factory the workers received as bonus 42 per cent of total profits from increased production. But the major effort for larger per-worker output has stalled because of mutual suspicion. The trade union leadership has insisted that joint factory committees must have power to prevent the productivity campaign from degenerating into a mere speed-up at labor's expense; management has resisted any encroachment of the committees which might end with labor's running or ownership of the factories. (There are justifications in Israel for both fears.) The result has been scant progress. In addition, the Research Institute and other industrial engineering groups have spent much of their time vainly begging to be heard by apathetic workers and managers.

The government, already overburdened and bottlenecked on numerous fronts, has not done nearly enough to make the entire population aware of productivity's crucial importance. Even less has the government found the necessary ingenuity to offer production incentives to old-time factories through adequate tax benefits and raw material allocations without cutting critically into revenue and foreign exchange supply. The government has its hands full with the problem of stimulating exports, but the need for stimulating productivity in areas of purely local consumption is equally urgent. As for an Export Center planned last fall which would exercise supreme control over standardization of quality, market research, and raw material distribution as prods to export productivity, it has not yet advanced beyond a blueprint.

It is understandable that a prospective foreign investor, upon discovering the antediluvian nature of certain Israeli enterprise, might recoil in dismay, particularly if his participation is to be limited to the mere furnishing of cash and supplies to an Israeli-managed firm.

But few desirable investment projects are so limited. In the more customary form of participation, the foreign investor sends to Israel not only modern machinery and equipment but also technical and even managerial know-how. In such cases, low productivity can be handled by the proper training of personnel in the new machinery and methods. Generally, such personnel is recruited from the new immigration, which lacks the inhibitions and resistances of encrusted Israeli labor. A body of data already exists, notably in the managerial reports of new American-financed enterprises like the Sargon knitting mill at Kfar Saba, the Capitol pipe fittings factory in Yazur, and the General shoe plant in Jerusalem—where Yemenites and North Africans are being trained by instructors from Tennessee—to suggest that Israeli apprentices take to American techniques with demonstrable aptitude.

There is another incentive to new investors: if their project is competitive, and they are permitted to run their plant in the American manner, they are likely to beat the Israeli competition hollow.

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WAGES: Israel's congenital malady of low productivity is exacerbated by the high wages paid to Israeli labor. Not that the wage rate does the worker much good: his fat pay envelope loses weight alarmingly as soon as it goes to market.

Mainly because of the bargaining power of a tightly organized labor force and the relative indifference to wage increases of owners accustomed to operating on a cost-plus basis, the average Israeli worker by mid-1949 was earning nearly twice as much as the British worker for producing half as much. He was getting 30 per cent less than the American worker. But the American's output was two to five times greater!

Clearly, such a ratio was deadly from every point of view: of the worker, whose inflated wages could buy little in the price-inflated and under-supplied domestic economy; of the potential investor in manufacture for the domestic market, whose product would have to be pegged at prices attainable only by the few; of the potential investor in export manufacture, whose expensively produced goods would have to compete against lower world prices; and of the government, which was striving at the same time to tempt foreign investment, push exports, and pull down the cost of living.

Accordingly the Israeli government—supported by the moderate majority leadership in Histadrut—succeeded in persuading labor at large after launching its "austerity" program in 1949 not only to cease asking for higher pay but to accept voluntary cuts in the supplementary cost-of-living allowance customarily added to basic pay, to be imposed in conjunction with price reductions. Even more revolutionary, a national Histadrut conference came out for piece-work payment in the interests of productivity—revising the classic position of Western-minded labor in favor of wages based on actual time at work.

Well into 1950 the austerity line held reasonably firm. Price and wage cuts meshed effectively to bring the nominal cost-of-living index (reckoned as 100 in 1939) steadily down from 371 in April 1949, to 317 in July 1950. Then it began to turn slightly upward. But the real seeds of trouble lay in the consumer supply shortage which had been spawning a wild black market and sending prices of everything but a meager quantity of rationed items far ahead of the cost-of-living wage supplement.

Money in circulation had been increasing far in excess of available goods—from 93 million dollars in January 1949, to 210 millions by January 1951—accentuating the high bidding for scarce commodities. Today an Israeli worker gets a little over a pound of rationed tinned meat monthly for 86 cents per pound—but extra meat sells for $4.20 per pound. His average income may be about $200 monthly, but that does not go very far when an extra suit costs him his whole month's wages on the black market, or when he spends $30 for shoes and $6 for his wife's nylon stockings.

THE 1949 wage "freeze" was not a formal contract but rather in the nature of a "gentleman's agreement." That agreement is now gravely threatened. Already in late 1949 and early 1950 the extreme leftist Mapam wing of Histadrut had unsuccessfully tried through wildcat strikes to mobilize the workers against concessions to austerity. The responsible Mapai element in Histadrut was able then to stand its ground for maintenance of the wage level. But a new Mapam-inspired walkout of metals workers has since broken the officially sanctioned truce on higher pay.

In the 50-million-dollar-a-year metals industry dispute, which closed twenty plants and curtailed production in ten others, ownership capped the workers' walkout with a lockout of its own, and insisted that increased pay would be ruinous unless workers earned it by increased productivity. The usually moderate Mapai leadership in Histadrut, goaded by increasingly loud "appeals to the working masses" from the rival Mapam, argued for its constituents—the workers—that there was plenty of margin for higher pay in the profits of management. Histadrut called for a nationwide sympathy strike; the Manufacturers' Association talked ominously of extending the lockout to other industries. Caught in the cross-fire was the harried government.

Ideologically socialist and founded on a Histadrut electorate, the Ben Gurion regime hitherto has sought a middle ground between its philosophy and the need for stabilizing prices and conciliating investors. Shaken by the inroads of liberal capitalist General Zion-

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ism in the recent municipal elections, it now faces the prospect of seeing its own bedrock labor support affected by the bread-and-butter outcry of the pro-Soviet, fellow-traveling Mapam.

Some observers deny that either Histadrut or the government intends to abandon the policy of wage freeze, despite appearances in the metals dispute and despite denials in the Knesset by Histadrut-Mapai members that the wage freeze is definite and irrevocable. Optimists point out that metals wage levels were as much as 22 per cent below other national industries, and assert that Histadrut was merely trying to bring the metals industry into line with the rest of the country. (The four-weeks metals strike concluded with an average wage increase of 14.8 per cent.) They also argue that Mapai has no call to conciliate Mapam, which made no gains at Mapai's expense in the municipal elections, actually lost strength itself, and is now weakened by internal dissension. One may hope that this interpretation is correct and that the Mapai majority in Histadrut will be able to stand firm against a disastrous wage spiral.

MONETARY RATE OF EXCHANGE: Contributing to the wage-price dilemma and in turn aggravated by it, the lack of balance between the Israeli pound and its "official" value in dollars is a prime discourager of foreign investment. Many analysts feel, in fact, that the lopsided rate of exchange is the fundamental economic reason for the feebleness of the investment program's performance to date.

Formally, the Israeli pound is listed at $2.80. Inside Israel, for *rationed and controlled* supplies, this rate may be more or less tolerable to dollar owners. But for everything else, and particularly for most imported goods, the pegged exchange value of the pound in dollar terms bears no relation to reality. As for the pound in the free money market, it sells universally at a crushing discount, and has been reported as low as 80 cents in the local black market. This alarming disparity is essentially due to the great Israeli need for hard currency and foreign imports and, conversely, the large quantity of pounds which have gone begging for conversion into stabler money, with few takers.

Foreign investors have manifested a stubborn but natural reluctance to involve themselves in any Israeli operation which requires surrender of a large amount of sound dollars for a small amount of dubious pounds. They have also allowed themselves to be depressed by the difficulties of selling their Israeli-produced goods at high pound prices in the world market. And they have certainly not been attracted by the likelihood of immobilizing most of their investment and potential profits in an inflated, almost non-negotiable currency—with the added hazard, due to the Israeli Treasury's foreign exchange penury, of not obtaining hard currency allocations from the government for import of raw materials needed in further operation of their enterprise.

TO MEET some of these objections, at least partially, the regime has authorized a variety of concessions to investors, and has winked at certain quiet arrangements which flagrantly violate the official exchange rate. Among the favorite permissible devices for "beating the exchange rap" are the following:

(1) As already indicated, a foreigner may bring in part or all of his investment in the form of machinery, equipment, and raw materials needed for the enterprise.

(2) The foreign investor may combine with Israeli associates who will supply local currency for the domestic costs (some thirty of the American projects sanctioned by the Investment Center have Israeli partnership) at a satisfactory rate of exchange with the Israeli on the latter's contribution to the venture in pounds, buildings, or materials.

(3) Where the foreign investor has no Israeli associate, or still requires pounds for building, payroll, and other domestic costs, he may be able to borrow funds locally, repayable out of his eventual pound profits. Or he may import a percentage of his investment as goods, not to be used in his enterprise but to be sold locally at a handsome gain in pounds. In effect, this is equivalent to giving him a "special" exchange rate, sometimes bringing the pound down to as low as $1.25 and $1.00. (Such "non-payment imports," in the case of building materials and other vital commodities in short supply, are even being permitted to non-investors, as a straight merchandising transaction.)

(4) Manufacturers producing for export

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may be aided in two ways to make up the difference between high local costs and world prices: by direct bonuses and subsidies, with extra premiums for extra exports (at the expense of the Israeli Treasury); or by increased allocations of raw materials to be processed and sold for higher profit locally (at the expense of the Israeli consumer).

DESPITE these and other complicated stratagems to circumvent the unrealistic "official" rate, all sources concede that the pegged pound remains a serious dampener of investor enthusiasm. The first shock of discovery that his dollar is technically worth only about 30 cents in Israel is sometimes sufficient to dissuade a prospective investor from further exploration. Devices like export subsidies, special exchange deals with the government, and private agreements with Israeli partners are useful neutralizers of the imbalance between dollar and pound; but, for various reasons, the government cannot publicize such conveniences and their availability is not widely known.

The net effect of the tricks and dodges employed by the government is to debase Israeli currency more than ever. Why, then, doesn't the government devaluate the pound openly to a more rational level, eliminating at one stroke the evils of the present disequilibrium? Such a move, it is argued, would not only give a potent push to investment but strongly improve the exporter's position, enabling him to meet world prices without subsidy and to earn hard currency for the national economy.

But, critics of devaluation ask, wouldn't domestic prices for *imported* goods become intolerably high for the taxpayer as consumer? Devaluationists reply that such prices are already intolerably high: despite recent improvement in controls over distribution, too many imports make their way into the black market, where their astronomical price is fixed in terms of the pound's real value anyway—or worse. In the early months of Israel's existence, in fact, some economists recommended that the pound be entirely liberated and allowed to find its own free level. They wanted Israel to become the banker for the eastern Mediterranean, a kind of free port, a miniature Switzerland, contending that if this had been done in time, Israel today might be prospering instead of living a precarious existence with so low a reserve of essential goods that bad shipping weather can sometimes empty the weekly ration bin.

Whatever the virtues of this bold program might once have been, it is admittedly too late to be attempted now. In its stead, many feel that Israel, lacking any gold or other adequate cover for its currency, should humbly seek the pound's alignment alongside the dollar or the sterling bloc. But this would be tantamount to full devaluation, which the Tel Aviv regime dreads because of the 8-to-1 preponderance of imports over exports, and would have embarrassing political overtones besides. As one very sober Israeli official admitted to the writer: "If we freed the pound now, who knows how far it would sink?"

Some measure of devaluation may yet be ventured, but for the moment the situation is regarded as too delicate for any ruthless cures. It is idle to speculate at this time on the policy of any revised cabinet coalition or of a new government emerging from general elections. What one may expect from the incumbent "socialist" regime is ultra-careful manipulation and a conservative attempt at "muddling through."

WE HAVE surveyed some of the bars and hindrances to large-scale private investment in Israel. Dissimilar in nature, they have one characteristic in common: all are outside the *direct* control of the regime. The war threat, the high wage scale, the low productivity, the swollen pound: official policy may influence them to a varying extent but is not necessarily the decisive force.

Close students of the Israeli scene, however, believe that certain other common complaints of investors leveled directly at the government could be met by that government itself. They cite bureaucratic inefficiency, an inordinate passion for controls over business, a preferential attitude toward the "cooperative" sector of the national economy at the expense of private enterprise, and a penny-wise-pound-foolish resistance to the further concessions which are imperative if Israel is to obtain the necessary capital investment. The writer hopes next, in a second article in these pages, to explore the pros and cons of such criticisms, with the purpose of contributing to American Jewry's factual information about the important points at issue.

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THE RETURN OF GOEBBELS' FILM-MAKERS

The Dilemma Posed by Werner Krauss and Veit Harlan

NORBERT MUHLEN

THE motion picture *Jud Süss* ("Jew Süss") was first shown in German and foreign theaters in 1940, shortly after Hitler began his war and took the first large steps to his "solution of the Jewish problem." The connection between the movie and these events was not fortuitous; as a matter of fact, the movie celebrated them. In 1945, with the end of the Hitler regime, *Jud Süss* was banned by decree of the Allied Military Occupation Governments, and the ban has remained in force ever since. But the picture is still well remembered by many Germans, and only recently it has become the occasion of two *causes célèbres*, the case of Veit Harlan, its co-author and director, and that of Werner Krauss, one of the actors. As a result, Germany has witnessed court trials, furious controversies in the press, political intrigues, and rather serious street riots.

What led to all this was the question whether those closely connected with the making of the picture could, ten years later, again participate in the public artistic life of their country. Have they, by their past actions, lost their right ever to be able to show themselves again on the German scene, as many anti-Nazi Germans claim? Or has the time come when bygones (rather, *some* bygones) should be bygones, as other Germans, also including many old foes and victims of the Nazis, argue? This question seems, with the possible exception of rearmament, the one most likely to stir up popular passion in Western Germany today, and much of the excitement it brews is bound to flow over into other lands too.

THE Jew Süss picture, the *corpus delicti* in both cases, is generally acknowledged to have been a pure piece of propaganda, whose purpose was to make its audiences hate Jews, to justify their extermination by the government, and to popularize the pogromistic *Weltanschauung* which, according to Goebbels, the German people did not yet sufficiently understand and accept. For this "message," the 18th-century history of the Jew Süss was well suited. He had been the ruthless financial director and sole minister of the despotic ruler of the Duchy of Württemberg, and he had ended his life upon the gallows after his master died. Most Germans were already familiar with the figure and the fate of this Jew through the classical short story by Wilhelm Hauff, written in the early 19th century with all the disgust felt by a man of the Enlightenment for tyrannical government, though also with pity for the "unfortunate children of Abraham." Hauff's story was prescribed reading for literate Germans for more than a century. The novelist Lion Feuchtwanger, in the 1920's, had to twist this story only slightly to have his slick, streamlined best-seller present Jew Süss as a victim of anti-Semitism, capitalism, and reaction. Dr.

THE German film *Jud Süss* ("Jew Süss") is known throughout the world as one of the most vicious products of Nazi propaganda against the Jews. The recent release of a new film by Veit Harlan, the director of *Jud Süss*, who in three successive trials has been cleared of all charges of collaboration with the Nazis, and the appearance on the Berlin stage of Werner Krauss, one of the featured actors in the picture, have aroused passions to fever pitch in Germany and evoked once more, in one of its innumerable guises, the whole problem of the guilt of the collaborator. NORBERT MUHLEN here reports the details of the controversy which has raged in Germany, and analyzes what it has to reveal of the state of the German mind today and the complexity of the question of German guilt. Mr. Muhlen is a close student of German politics; his most recent contribution to COMMENTARY was "The New Nazis of Germany," a report on life in the Soviet Zone, published in our January issue.

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Joseph Goebbels had to twist the same story only a little in the opposite direction to present him on the screen as a bloodthirsty exploiter, the personification of *"Die Juden sind unser Unglück"* ("The Jews are our misfortune").

Goebbels commissioned Veit Harlan to write the script and direct the picture. Harlan, who had been an outstanding actor in the Weimar Republic, was by now one of the leading movie-makers of a Germany whose cinematic leaders had emigrated for racial, political, or artistic reasons. Harlan's original script was edited by Goebbels, who considered it not sufficiently anti-Semitic. In Harlan's version, for instance, Süss's last words were a horrible malediction cursing his executioners and their people. Goebbels flew into a rage over this scene—he wished the Jew to die less heroically and he made him whimper despicably for mercy. The Propaganda Minister also laid his hand on other scenes, and Harlan could later prove that in directing the film he himself had eliminated a few of the most poisonous of Goebbels' touches—whether for artistic or other reasons, we do not know. Nevertheless, the finished picture was a merciless divertissement on the theme of Jewish extermination; it did not. one is happy to say, fare too well at the box offices.

After the Nazi defeat, Harlan had to defend himself three times in German courts against the charge of being a major Nazi; had he been convicted he would have been barred from all stage and screen work. First he stood trial in the Hamburg Denazification Chamber (Central Committee for the Elimination of Nazis), where an anti-Nazi jury had to acquit him in accordance with the denazification law drawn up and decreed by Occupation authorities that made formal membership in Nazi organizations the legal test for individual guilt; the court found no evidence of Harlan's membership in any one of the organizations classified as criminal. He stood a second trial before a regular Hamburg jury for his individual "crime against humanity" in participating in the making of the Jew Süss picture, and he was again acquitted for lack of evidence proving criminal intent. After the British Occupation Zone Supreme Court in Cologne declared this acquittal null and void, the case went back for retrial to the Hamburg court, which took testimony for a month and arrived at a second acquittal in April 1950. Three months later the office of the attorney general declared that it would not appeal the judgment, although it considered it a miscarriage of justice; evidence could not be produced to refute Harlan's claim that he would have been in danger of his life had he not followed Goebbels' orders to make the picture; moreover, there would be even less evidence at a new trial because, as the prosecuting authority put it, "experience shows that the prosecution witnesses tend to become more and more tolerant as time goes on."

WHETHER Harlan was a "real" Nazi, or a hapless non-Nazi, or—as he himself alleged with witnesses and evidence—an anti-Nazi in protective brown coloring, is a question hard to answer in purely legalistic terms. From what was learned at the trials, and from the testimony of people who know Harlan well, it seems that he was a rather representative member of that largest class of Germans which cannot be fitted snugly into the customary triptych of "real" Nazis, non-Nazis, and anti-Nazis. In Harlan's case, as in so many others, a mixture of various motives, none of them being a fanatical enthusiasm for the totalitarian system, produced that irresponsible submission to and support of the Nazi dictatorship which was its real source of popular strength.

Harlan "only followed orders." Had he refused to follow orders, he pleaded, his life would have been in danger—or if not his life, at least the style of living to which a successful movie-maker is accustomed. "I did not want to have to ride again on street cars," he admitted with the vanity of a man convinced that the world owed him a Rolls Royce. Easily tempted and easily scared, Harlan acceded to a *Gleichschaltung* that cleared the way for his many professional triumphs and Nazi honors—in 1943 Goebbels even con-

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ferred upon the actor the title of "professor." (It made Harlan "very happy," Goebbels noted in his diaries.) In his own justification, he has asserted that he intervened on behalf of a political prisoner (true), he remained on friendly terms with a number of Jews (also true), he had many controversies with Goebbels (again true), and—that eternal half-truth in the fellow-traveler's self-defense—he "kept things from getting worse."

Now that Harlan had collected what the Germans called "Persil" certificates (Persil being the name of a popular powder soap for dirty linen), he could return to his old vocation of making movies. Since he is one of the very few available craftsmen left in the German field, he quickly found a producer as well as a distributor to finance his new venture. Six months after his final acquittal he offered a new film to German exhibitors, a melancholy love picture titled *Unsterbliche Geliebte* ("Immortal Beloved"), based on Theodor Storm's 19th-century novella, *Aquis Submersus.*

A NUMBER of theaters booked the new picture immediately, even before it was finished, but a voice was heard in protest. Erich Lueth had been movie critic for a Hamburg daily paper before Hitler, had been fired by the Nazis, and spent the years of the Third Reich as advertising manager of a sewing machine concern, then as a soldier drafted into the German army, and finally as prisoner of war; after the debacle he was appointed press chief and *Senatsdirektor* by the Social Democratic Hamburg city government.

Representing Hamburg officially at the opening of German Motion Picture Week in that city, Lueth declared: "His [Harlan's] acquittal in Hamburg was only formal, the judgment convicted him morally. We request that German motion picture distributors and theater owners show an attitude that will not be inexpensive for them but which we all ought to pay a price for—moral stamina. . . ."

What he meant by this Lueth soon made clear in an open letter to Harlan written on his personal responsibility: "Anyone who has been as outstanding a director of Nazi movies as the co-creator of *Jud Süss,* Herr Harlan, should be blackballed in disgust by all decent Germans mindful of the tears that still flow at millions of Jewish graves. . . . Harlan's re-emergence will open wounds which have hardly closed. . . . It is the duty even more than the right of all decent Germans to be ready, not only to protest against, but to boycott Veit Harlan."

Harlan promptly sued Lueth before the Hamburg regional court. That body, in a decision without much relation to, or understanding of, political realities, decided that Herr Lueth's constitutional right of free speech collided with Herr Harlan's equally constitutional rights of free expression and free trade. Since Harlan was lawfully acquitted, the court continued, he had the right to resume his old trade as screen director, even if it was "politically unwise and perhaps tactless." And although "there was no evidence that Herr Lueth acted from selfish or immoral motives" (which alone would make a call for a boycott criminal under German law), he certainly aimed to prevent Harlan from working at his chosen profession; the court therefore ruled that Herr Lueth would have to abstain from calling for a boycott on the pain of fines and jail sentence.

Lueth appealed this decision immediately, and a great number of Germans, as individuals and as members of various organizations, publicly declared their solidarity with Lueth and his call for a boycott. "That's the trouble with us Germans," Lueth had sighed once in a talk with this writer. "We don't expose ourselves personally in matters of public concern." But the reaction to his boycott appeal showed that there were quite a few Germans who, when confronted with a case like Veit Harlan's, were willing to expose themselves in order to fight the memory of that past with which his name is associated.

WHILE the Harlan "affair" was unfolding, the famous Vienna Burgtheater company, then on its first—and successful—postwar visit to Western Germany, scheduled a

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visit to the city of West Berlin as part of the last leg of its trip. Its leading female player was Frau Helene Thimig, a great actress, the widow of Max Reinhardt, and definitely a "real" Nazi victim. The troupe's director was Walter Felsenstein, a Communist of Austrian Jewish descent who, as a stage director in East Berlin, had been awarded the "National Prize" by the East German Communist government; he was now working in Vienna, which is less firm against Communists in public life than West Berlin, and thus he was able, by virtue of an "Austrian-German cultural exchange"—under which slogan the Vienna troupe toured Germany—to gain an entry into West Berlin that he could not have had coming directly from East Berlin. The leading male star of the company was Werner Krauss, a famous and very popular old actor who ten years before had played (at Goebbels' "request") the role of a rabbi and a few minor Jewish parts in *Jud Süss,* injecting into all of them a highly repulsive note.

In the first postwar years Krauss had not been permitted to appear on the stage until after having been cleared in three separate denazification trials; after his acquittal a number of returned Jewish and political refugees, some of them active in the office of Military Government, joined forces to get a contract for Krauss at the Burgtheater.

When Krauss's visit to Berlin was announced, a few carefully worded objections were put into print by Berlin's leading drama critic, while three leaders of the West Berlin Jewish community paid a protest visit to West Berlin's Lord Mayor Ernst Reuter—himself a one-time inhabitant of the Nazi concentration camps, an exile in Turkey during most of Hitler's reign, and a bitter foe of anti-Semitism. Reuter declared to the Jewish delegation that he was unwilling to tolerate anything that would hurt their feelings, but he also explained to them that the appearance of the Vienna troupe was in the interests of the city, and that he did not see how "inviting Krauss out" would be of benefit to the Jewish community or to the fight against anti-Semitism. How this meeting ended we can only guess, since it was not recorded, and the participants gave two substantially different versions of it. According to Reuter, the Jewish delegation was convinced and promised that it would not publish a protest or do anything at all to hinder the appearance of Krauss. According to Heinz Galinski, one of the three Jewish delegates, this was not true (his two fellow delegates did not reveal their recollections of the meeting).

BEFORE the Vienna troupe formally opened its West Berlin stay with Ibsen's play, *John Gabriel Borkman,* the Berlin Jewish community, through its spokesman Galinski, published a sharp protest against Krauss's appearance. Responding to it, a large group of students at West Berlin's two main universities—the Free University and the Technical University—announced that on the play's first night they would march to the theater on nearby Kurfuerstendamm from their *Studentenhaus* to demonstrate their solidarity with their Jewish fellow citizens. "We refuse to see once more in Berlin the man who, by his work in the Jew Süss picture, directly incited the youth to race hatred," the president of the student council of the Technical University, Günther Zwingmann, proclaimed. The pro-rector of the Free University and leaders of its student body joined him; and the students painted signs with yellow stars and the words, "Don't forget that!" to be paraded outside the theater. The West Berlin police at first permitted but at the last minute forbade the demonstration. Reuter, remonstrating with the demonstrators, told them over the radio: "After all there must be a time for forgiveness. . . . Berlin will show that it is a city that can forgive."

Despite the police ban and Reuter's appeal, numbers of students, joined by some members of Berlin's Jewish community, members of the Society for Christian-Jewish Cooperation, Jewish DP's, and by individual anti-Nazis, marched on the opening night toward the theater, shouting slogans such as *"Nazi-Krauss, geh nach Haus!"* ("Nazi Krauss, go home") and *"Felsenstein, geh heim!"* (Felsenstein, go home"). They were

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met near the theater by a strong force of West Berlin police. There were some ugly scuffles between the police and the demonstrators, and some of the latter were knocked to the ground and beaten. The excitement flowed over into the theater, where one of the audience stepped on the stage and told of what was going on outside, urging that the performance be discontinued. He was bodily thrown out of the theater by stagehands, and so were others who loudly protested against Krauss; still others shouted in opposition: "We want Krauss!"

Similar incidents occurred the next evening, although the authorities threw a police cordon equipped with "water guns" around the theater. But the Kurfuerstendamm, which is Berlin's equivalent of Broadway and Fifth Avenue combined, saw brawls continue, with even a few "real" Nazis turning up with anti-Semitic slogans, and some playgoers were heard making anti-Semitic remarks against the demonstrators. RIAS, the American-sponsored radio station with a large audience behind the Iron Curtain, broadcast eyewitness reports from the battle scene; and the Communists of East Berlin and East Germany greatly enjoyed "the revolt," as they called it, "of the free Berliners against their neo-fascist city government, their Nazi guests, and their American overlords." What the Communists did not mention was that the anti-Nazi demonstrators were also anti-Communists who for four years had consistently demonstrated against the totalitarians from the East too.

It was perhaps only to be expected that, with Mayor Reuter taking a stand which was not very popular even among his own close political friends, his political rivals and enemies should have tried to make capital of the situation. Kurt Schumacher, the leader of the German Social Democratic party, and Franz Neumann, his Berlin representative, now attacked Reuter (himself a Social Democrat) and demanded that he cancel the Krauss performances—though they themselves had found no cause for concern during Krauss's tour of Western Germany.

When, after the third performance, the tumult still did not die down and the anti-Krauss forces threatened new and more vigorous demonstrations, Krauss himself and his Vienna troupe decided to break off their Berlin visit. Mayor Reuter spoke to his city by radio, explaining that he had not foreseen these incidents, since Krauss had played undisturbedly for several years past in Austria and Western Germany, and in view moreover of his (Reuter's) own supposedly conciliatory agreement with the representatives of the Jewish community. He also expressed his deep regret that people had been hurt in the melees, but, he continued, he himself could not give way to the protesters, for "God has not made me a judge over other men. I believe that there must be a time when people forgive. No force in the world shall keep me from this belief, not even the risk of a break with my best friends. From perennial continuation of hatred nothing good can ever arise." To this Herr Galinski publicly retorted that "neither Herr Reuter nor the city of Berlin have been asked whether they forgive or not—for they have nothing to forgive. The dead of Auschwitz and Maidanek do not forgive, and we, their survivors, are therefore not permitted nor are we able to forgive."

Afterward Mayor Reuter reasserted his intention of fighting anti-Semitism if and when "instincts believed to be dead for years should revive"; and the students' parliament of the Technical University published an open letter to the Jewish community of Berlin, affirming that "we would oppose with all the means at our command any attempt to create anew a racial problem in Germany. . . . We definitely oppose anything that might hurt our Jewish fellow citizens." That the people of Berlin had not as a whole shown any signs of anti-Semitic feeling during or after the riots is attested to by all competent observers, from Herr Galinksi to Mr. Raymond Page, the director of the Berlin Office of the United States High Commissioner for Germany.

THE Werner Krauss "incident" is closed, with Krauss safely back in Vienna, far from Berlin's angry crowds. The case of

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Veit Harlan may yet, when his new picture is widely shown, be an occasion for controversy and even demonstration—though outside Berlin there will probably be little of the spectacular. But what do these two events tell us about the political and spiritual climate of West Germany today?

Firstly, it is clear that anti-Semitism is still on the defensive in post-Hitler Germany. The Harlan and the Krauss protests were begun by people ashamed of the memories of Nazi pogroms, and even Veit Harlan found it necessary to stress as vigorously as he could that he was really a philo-Semite, while Krauss in Berlin paid public homage to the memory of the Jewish Austrian, Max Reinhardt ("to whom I owe everything in my life"). Those who opposed the call for a boycott were not only the people who had been themselves tainted with guilt in the Nazi era—though there were undoubtedly many such voices in the pro-Harlan and pro-Krauss chorus. There were also, first of all, people who did not want politics to interfere with their enjoyment of an artist; secondly, those to whom it seemed ironical and unjust that the return of ex-Nazi actors or movie directors should be more bitterly opposed than that of far guiltier politicians, administrators, businessmen, or writers, simply because entertainers figured more prominently in the public view; thirdly, there were those who felt as did the staunch Austrian anti-Nazi Hans Weigel, when he said that "the time has come to forget human weaknesses, omissions, and concessions to the terror state *if* they were humanly understandable and not criminal."

This last point of view is probably the most widespread one, but it does not supply a principle easy of application. The anti-Semitic policy, and its consequences, was the most monstrous feature of the Nazi regime, and its crimes against the Jews cannot be glossed over with considerations of political expediency—considerations aiming to heal old divisions and to satisfy the desire of the majority of the Germans to "forgive and forget." Harlan and Krauss may have let themselves be used as instruments of anti-Semitic propaganda only unwillingly, but their submission is nevertheless something for which they have now, in some measure, to bear the consequences. Any possible injustice that might be done them as individuals by their exclusion from the German stage and screen is counterbalanced by the injustice done to the feelings of Jewish mourners, by the anguished memories stirred up by the names and faces of these two men. Erich Lueth, in protesting against Harlan's comeback, and the Berliners, in demonstrating against Krauss, acted out of a right moral instinct.

Yet when Mayor Reuter fought for the right of Werner Krauss to appear on the Berlin stage—it should be noted that Reuter has expressed sympathy with the boycott of Harlan's films—it was for reasons of political morality, too, rather than mere expediency. For totalitarianism always involves, and corrupts, a majority of the people. That an advocate of mass murder like Streicher was to be silenced forever, every decent German agreed; Ilse Koch was convicted by a German court, and no German voice was raised in her defense; but opinion is split with regard to the tens of thousands of Krausses, exactly because people who have themselves lived under Nazism—including many who fought against it—recognize how difficult it was for the individual not to be corrupted to some degree. To turn all these people into perennial outcasts, to exclude from the new society even those who may be willing honestly to mend their ways and break with their past, would be to encourage hostility against the young German republic and limit significant possibilities for the regeneration of individual Germans and German society. Totalitarianism brands whole groups of people as eternal enemies. Can democracy, which believes in —and is based on—the improvability and potential decency of the individual and society, rightfully insist that all sinners against civilized morality, even if they have committed no legally punishable acts of criminality, be condemned to lifelong punishment, denied a second chance? This is the dilemma posed by the cases of Harlan and Krauss.

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LOOKING FOR MR. GREEN

A Story

SAUL BELLOW

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might. . . .

HARD work? No, it wasn't really so hard. He wasn't used to walking and stair-climbing, but the physical difficulty of his new job was not what George Grebe felt most. He was delivering Relief checks in the Negro district, and although he was a native Chicagoan this was not a part of the city he knew much about—it needed a depression to introduce him to it. No, it wasn't literally hard work, not as reckoned in foot-pounds, but yet he was beginning to feel the strain of it, to grow aware of its peculiar difficulty. He could find the streets and numbers, but the clients were not where they were supposed to be, and he felt like a hunter inexperienced in the camouflage of his game. It was an unfavorable day, too—fall, and cold, dark weather, windy. But, anyway, instead of shells in his deep trench coat pocket he had the cardboard of checks, punctured for the spindles of the file, the holes reminding him of the holes in player-piano paper. And he didn't look much like a hunter, either; his was a city figure entirely, belted up in this Irish conspirator's coat. He was slender without being tall, stiff in the back, his legs looking shabby in a pair of old tweed pants, gone through and fringy at the cuffs. With this stiffness, he kept his head forward, so that his face was red from the sharpness of the weather; and it was an indoors sort of face with gray eyes that persisted in some kind of thought and yet seemed to avoid definiteness of conclusion. He wore sideburns that surprised you somewhat by the tough curl of the blond hair and the effect of assertion in their length. He was not so mild as he looked, nor so youthful; and nevertheless there was no effort on his part to seem what he was not. He was an educated man; he was a bachelor; he was in some ways simple; without lushing, he liked a drink; his luck had not been good. Nothing was deliberately hidden.

He felt that his luck was better than usual today. When he had reported for work that morning, he had expected to be shut up in the Relief office at a clerk's job, for he had been hired downtown as a clerk, and he was glad to have, instead, the freedom of the streets and welcomed, at least at first, the vigor of the cold and even the blowing of the hard wind. But on the other hand he was not getting on with the distribution of the checks. It was true that it was a city job; nobody expected you to push too hard at a city job. His supervisor, that young Mr. Raynor, had practically told him that. Still, he wanted to do well at it. For one thing, when he knew how quickly he could deliver a batch of checks, he would know also how much time he could expect to clip for himself. And then, too, the clients would be waiting for their money. That was not the most important consideration, though it certainly mattered to him. No, but he wanted to do well, simply for doing-well's sake, to acquit himself decently of a job because he so rarely had a job to do that required just this sort of energy. Of this peculiar energy he now had a superabundance; once it had started to flow, it flowed all too heavily. And, for the time being anyway, he was balked. He could not find Mr. Green.

SO HE stood in his big-skirted trench coat with a large envelope in his hand and papers showing from his pocket, wondering why people should be so hard to locate who were too feeble or sick to come to the station to collect their own checks. But Raynor had

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SAUL BELLOW, author of this story of the city-wilderness, has published two novels, *Dangling Man* (1944) and *The Victim* (1947), as well as short stories in numerous periodicals. Mr. Bellow was born in Lachine, Quebec, Canada, in 1915 and studied at the University of Chicago. He is at present working on a new novel, *Life Among the Machiavellians.*

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told him that tracking them down was not easy at first and had offered him some advice on how to proceed. "If you can see the postman, he's your first man to ask, and your best bet. If you can't connect with him, try the stores and tradespeople around. Then the janitor and the neighbors. But you'll find the closer you come to your man the less people will tell you. They don't want to tell you anything."

"Because I'm a stranger."

"Because you're white. We ought to have a Negro doing this, but we don't at the moment, and of course you've got to eat, too, and this is public employment. Jobs have to be made. Oh, that holds for me too. Mind you, I'm not letting myself out. I've got three years of seniority on you, that's all. And a law degree. Otherwise, you might be back of the desk and I might be going out into the field this cold day. The same dough pays us both and for the same, exact, identical reason. What's my law degree got to do with it? But you have to pass out these checks, Mr. Grebe, and it'll help if you're stubborn, so I hope you are."

"Yes, I'm fairly stubborn."

Raynor sketched hard with an eraser in the old dirt of his desk, left-handed, and said, "Sure, what else can you answer to such a question. Anyhow, the trouble you're going to have is that they don't like to give information about anybody. They think you're a plain-clothes dick or an installment collector, or summons-server or something like that. Till you've been seen around the neighborhood for a few months and people know you're only from the Relief."

It was dark, ground-freezing, pre-Thanksgiving weather, the wind played hob with the smoke, rushing it down, and Grebe missed his gloves, which he had left in Raynor's office. And no one would admit knowing Green. It was past three o'clock and the postman had made his last delivery. The nearest grocer, himself a Negro, had never heard the name Tulliver Green, or said he hadn't. Grebe was inclined to think that it was true, that he had in the end convinced the man that he only wanted to deliver a check. But he wasn't sure. He needed experience in interpreting looks and signs and, even more, the will not to be put off or denied and even the force to bully, if need be. If the grocer did know, he had got rid of him easily. But since most of his trade was with reliefers, why should he prevent the delivery of a check? Maybe Green, or Mrs. Green, if there was a Mrs. Green, patronized another grocer. And was there a Mrs. Green? It was one of Grebe's great handicaps that he hadn't looked at any of the case records. Raynor should have let him read files for a few hours. But he apparently saw no need for that, probably considering the job unimportant. Why prepare systematically to deliver a few checks?

But now it was time to look for the janitor. Grebe took in the building in the wind and gloom of the late November day—trampled, frost-hardened lots on one side; on the other, an automobile junk yard and then the infinite work of Elevated frames, weak-looking, gaping with rubbish fires; two sets of leaning brick porches three stories high and a flight of cement stairs to the cellar. Descending, he entered the underground passage where he tried the doors until one opened and he found himself in the furnace room. There someone rose toward him and approached, scraping on the coal grit and bending under the canvas-jacketed pipes.

"Are you the janitor?"

"What do you want?"

"I'm looking for a man who's supposed to be living here. Green."

"What Green?"

"Oh, you maybe have more than one Green?" said Grebe with new, pleasant hope. "This is Tulliver Green."

"I don't think I c'n help you, mister. I don't know any."

"A crippled man."

The janitor stood bent before him. Could it be that he was crippled? Oh, God! what if he was. Grebe's gray eyes sought with excited difficulty to see. But no, he was only very short and stooped. A head awakened from meditation, a strong-haired beard, low, wide shoulders. A staleness of sweat and coal rose from his black shirt and the burlap sack he wore as an apron.

"Crippled how?"

Grebe thought and then answered with the light voice of unmixed candor, "I don't know. I've never seen him." This was damaging, but his only other choice was to make a lying guess, and he was not up to it. "I'm delivering checks for the Relief to shut-in

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cases. If he weren't crippled he'd come to collect himself. That's why I said crippled. Bedridden, chair-ridden . . . is there anybody like that?"

This sort of frankness was one of Grebe's oldest talents, going back to childhood. But it gained him nothing here.

"No suh. I've got four buildin's same as this that I take care of. I don' know all the tenants, leave alone the tenants' tenants. The rooms turn over so fast, people movin' in and out every day. I can't tell you."

"Then where should I ask?"

The janitor opened his grimy lips but Grebe did not hear him in the piping of the valves and the consuming pull of air to flame in the body of the furnace. He knew, however, what he had said.

"Well, all the same, thanks. Sorry I bothered you, I'll prowl around upstairs again and see if I can turn up someone who knows him."

ONCE more in the cold air and early darkness, he made the short circle from the cellarway to the entrance crowded between the brickwork pillars and began to climb to the third floor. Pieces of plaster ground under his feet; strips of brass tape from which the carpeting had been torn away marked old boundaries at the sides. In the passage, the cold reached him worse than in the street; it touched him to the bone. The hall toilets ran like springs. He thought grimly as he heard the wind burning around the building with a sound like that of the furnace, that this was a great piece of constructed shelter. Then he struck a match in the gloom and searched for names and numbers among the writings and scribbles on the walls. He saw "WHOODY-DOODY GO TO JESUS," and zigzags, caricatures, sexual scrawls, and curses. So the sealed rooms of pyramids were also decorated, and the caves of human dawn.

The information on his card was, TULLIVER GREEN—APT 3D. There were no names, however, and no numbers. His shoulders drawn up, tears of cold in his eyes, breathing vapor, he went the length of the corridor and told himself that if he had been lucky enough to have the temperament for it he would bang on one of the doors and bawl out "Tulliver Green!" until he got results. But it wasn't in him to make an uproar and he continued to burn matches, passing the light over the walls. At the rear, in a corner off the hall, he discovered a door he had not seen before and he thought it best to investigate. It sounded empty, when he knocked, but a young Negress answered, hardly more than a girl. She opened only a bit, to protect the warmth of the room.

"Yes suh?"

"I'm from the district Relief station on Prairie Avenue. I'm looking for a man named Tulliver Green to give him his check. Do you know him?"

No, she didn't; but he thought she had not understood anything of what he had said. She had a dream-bound, dream-blind face, very soft and black, shut off. She wore a man's jacket and pulled the ends together at her throat. Her hair was parted in three directions, at the sides and transversely, standing up at the front in a dull puff.

"Is there somebody around here who might know?"

"I jus' taken this room las' week."

He observed that she shivered, but even her shiver was somnambulistic and there was no sharp consciousness of cold in the big smooth eyes of her handsome face.

"All right, miss, thank you. Thanks," he said, and went to try another place.

Here he was admitted. He was grateful, for the room was warm. It was full of people, and they were silent as he entered—ten people, or a dozen, perhaps more, sitting on benches like a parliament. There was no light, properly speaking, but a tempered darkness that the window gave, and everyone seemed to him enormous, the men padded out in heavy work clothes and winter coats, and the women huge, too, in their sweaters, hats and old furs. And, besides, bed and bedding, a black cooking range, a piano piled towering to the ceiling with paper, a dining-room table of the old style of prosperous Chicago. Among these people Grebe, with his cold-heightened fresh color and his smaller stature, entered like a school lad. Even though he was met with smiles and good will, he felt that all the currents ran against him and that he would make no headway. Without having spoken a single word he knew that he was already outweighed and overborne. Nevertheless he began: "Does anybody here know how I can deliver a check to Mr. Tulliver Green?"

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"Green?" It was the man that had let him in who answered. He was in shirt sleeves, in a checkered shirt, and had a queer, high head, profusely overgrown, long as a shako; the veins entered it strongly from his forehead. "I never heard mention of him. Is this where he live?"

"This is the address they gave me at the station. He's a sick man, and he'll need his check. Can't anybody tell me where to find him?"

He stood his ground and waited for a reply, his crimson wool scarf wound about his neck and drooping outside his trench coat, pockets weighted with the block of checks and official forms. They must have realized that he was not a college boy employed afternoons by a bill collector, trying foxily to pass for a Relief clerk, recognized that he was an older man who knew himself what need was, who had had more than an average seasoning in hardship. It was evident enough if you looked at the marks under his eyes and at the sides of his mouth.

"Anybody know this sick man?"

"No suh." On all sides he saw heads shaken and smiles of denial. No one knew. And maybe it was true, he considered, standing silent in the earthen, musky human gloom of the place as the rumble continued. But he could never really be sure.

"What's the matter with this man?" said shako-head.

"I've never seen him. All I can tell you is that he can't come in person for his money. It's my first day in this district."

"Maybe they given you the wrong number?"

"I don't believe so. But where else can I ask about him?" He felt that his persistence amused them deeply, and in a way he shared their amusement that he should stand up so tenaciously to them. Though smaller, though slight, he was his own man, he retracted nothing about himself, and he looked back at them, gray-eyed, with amusement and also with a sort of effrontery. On the bench, some man spoke in his throat, the words impossible to catch, and a woman answered with a wild, shrieking laugh, quickly cut off.

"Well, so nobody will tell me?"

"Ain't nobody who knows."

"At least, if he lives here, he pays rent to someone. Who manages the building?"

"Greatham Company. That's on 39th Street."

Grebe wrote it in his pad. But, in the street again, a sheet of wind-driven paper clinging to his leg while he deliberated what direction to take next, it seemed a feeble lead to follow. Probably this Green didn't rent a flat, but a room. Sometimes there were as many as twenty people living in an apartment; the real estate agent would know only the lessee. And not even the latter could tell you who the renters were. In some places the beds were even used in shifts, watchmen, or jitney drivers or short-order cooks in night joints turning out after a day's sleep and surrendering their beds to a sister, a nephew, or perhaps a stranger, a transient who paid something for it. There were large numbers of these transients in this terrific, blight-bitten portion of the city between Cottage Grove and Ashland, wandering from house to house and room to room. When you saw them wander, how would you know? They didn't carry bundles on their backs or look picturesque. You simply saw a man, a Negro, walking in the street or riding in the car, like everyone else, with his thumb closed on a transfer. And therefore how were you supposed to tell? Grebe fancied the Greatham agent would only laugh at his question.

But how much it would simplify his task to be able to say that Green was old, or blind, or consumptive. An hour in the files, taking a few notes, and he need not have been at such a disadvantage. When Raynor gave him the block of checks, he had asked, "How much should I know about these people?" Then Raynor had looked as though he were preparing to accuse him of trying to make the job more important than it was. He smiled, because by then they were on fine terms, but nevertheless he had been getting ready to say something like that when the confusion began in the station over Staika and her children.

Grebe had waited a long time for this job. It came to him through the pull of an old schoolmate in the Corporation Counsel's Office, never a close friend, but suddenly sympathetic and interested—pleased to show, moreover, how well he had done, how strongly he was coming through these miserable times. Well, he was coming through

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strongly, as strongly as the Democratic administration itself. Grebe had gone to see him in City Hall, and they had had a counter lunch or beers at least once a month for a year, and finally it had been possible to swing the job. He didn't mind being assigned the lowest clerical grade, nor even being a messenger, though Raynor thought he did.

This Raynor was an original sort. Grebe had immediately taken to him. As was proper on the first day, Grebe had come early, but he waited long, for Raynor was late. At last he darted into his cubicle of an office as though he had just jumped from one of those hurtling huge red Indiana Avenue cars. His thin, rough face was windstung and he was grinning and saying something breathlessly to himself. In his hat, a small fedora, and his coat, the velvet collar a neat fit about his neck, and his silk muffler that set off the nervous twist of his chin—he swayed and turned himself in his swivel chair, feet leaving the ground; so that he pranced a little as he sat. Meanwhile he took Grebe's measure out of his eyes, eyes of an unusual veitical length, a trace sardonic. So the two men sat for a while, saying nothing, while the supervisor raised his hat from his miscombed hair and put it in his lap. His cold-darkened hands were not clean. A steel beam passed through the little makeshift room from which machine belts once had hung. The building was an old factory.

"I'M YOUNGER than you; I hope you won't find it hard taking orders from me," said Raynor. "But I don't make them up, either. You're how old, about?"

"Thirty-five."

"And you thought you'd be inside doing paper-work. But it so happens I have to send you out."

"I don't mind."

"And it's mostly a Negro load we have in this district."

"So I thought it would be."

"Fine. You'll get along. *C'est un bon boulot.* Do you know French?"

"Some."

"I thought you'd be a university man."

"Have you been in France?" said Grebe.

"No, that's the French of the Berlitz School. I've been at it for more than a year, just as I'm sure people have been, all over the world, office boys in China and braves in Tanganyika. In fact, I damn well know it. Such is the attractive power of civilization. It's overrated, but what do you want? *Que voulez vous?* I get *Le Rire* and all the spicy papers, just like in Tanganyika. It must be mystifying, out there. But my reason is that I'm aiming at the diplomatic service. I have a cousin who's a courier, and the way he describes it is awfully attractive. He rides in the *wagons-lits* and reads books. While we . . . What did you do before?"

"I sold."

"Where?"

"Canned meat at Stop and Shop. In the basement."

"And before that?"

"Window shades, at Goldblatt's."

"Steady work?"

"No, Thursdays and Saturdays. I also sold shoes."

"You've been a shoe-dog, too. Well. And prior to that? Here it is in your folder." He opened the record. "St. Olaf's College, instructor in classical languages. Fellow, University of Chicago, 1926-27. I've had Latin, too. Let's trade quotations—*Dum spiro spero.*"

"Da dextram misero."

"Alea jacta est."

"Excelsior."

Raynor shouted with laughter, and other workers came to look at him over the partition. Grebe also laughed, feeling pleased and easy. The luxury of fun on a nervous morning.

When they were done and no one was watching or listening, Raynor said rather seriously, "What made you study Latin in the first place. Was it for the priesthood?"

"No."

"Just for the hell of it? As a luxury? Oh, the things people think they can pull!" He made his cry hilarious and tragic. "I ran my pants off so I could study for the bar, and I've passed the bar, so I get twelve dollars a week more than you as a bonus for having seen life straight and whole. I'll tell you, as a man of culture, that even though nothing looks to be real, and everything stands for something else, and that thing for another thing, and that thing for a still further one —there ain't any comparison between twenty-five and thirty-seven dollars a week, regardless of the last reality. Don't you think that

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was clear to your Greeks? They were a thoughtful people, but they didn't part with their slaves."

This was a great deal more than Grebe had looked for in his first interview with his supervisor. He was too shy to show all the astonishment he felt. He laughed a little, aroused, and brushed at the sunbeam that covered his head with its dust. "Do you think my mistake was so terrible?"

"Damn right it was terrible, and you know it now that you've had the whip of hard times laid on your back. You should have been preparing yourself for trouble. Your people must have been well off to send you to the university. Stop me, if I'm stepping on your toes. Did your mother pamper you? Did your father give in to you? Were you brought up tenderly, with permission to go out and find out what were the last things that everything else stands for while everybody else labored in the fallen world of appearances?"

"Well, no, it wasn't exactly like that." Grebe smiled. *The fallen world of appearances!* no less. But now it was his turn to deliver a surprise. "We weren't rich. My father was the last genuine English butler in Chicago. . . ."

"Are you kidding?"

"Why should I be?"

"In a livery."

"In livery. Up on the Gold Coast."

"And he wanted you to be educated like a gentleman?"

"He did not. He sent me to the Armour Institute to study chemical engineering. But when he died I changed schools."

HE STOPPED himself, and considered how quickly Raynor had reached him. In no time he had your valise on the table and your things unpacked. And afterwards, in the streets, he was still reviewing how far he might have gone, and how much he might have been led to tell if they had not been interrupted by Mrs. Staika's great noise.

But just then a young woman, one of Raynor's workers, ran into the cubicle exclaiming, "Haven't you heard all the fuss?"

"We haven't heard anything."

"It's Staika, giving out with all her might. Reporters are coming. She said she phoned the papers, and you know she did."

"But what is she up to?" said Raynor.

"She brought her wash and she's ironing it here, with our current, because the Relief won't pay her electric bill. She has her ironing board set up by the admitting desk, and her kids are with her, all six. They never are in school more than once a week. She's always dragging them around with her because of her reputation."

"I don't want to miss any of this," said Raynor jumping up. Grebe, as he followed with the secretary, said, "Who is this Staika?"

"They call her the 'Blood Mother of Federal Street.' She's a professional donor at the hospitals. I think they pay ten dollars a pint. Of course it's no joke, but she makes a very big thing out of it and she and the kids are in the papers all the time."

Scores of people, staff and clients divided by a plywood barrier, stood in the narrow space of the entrance, and Staika was shouting in a gruff, mannish voice, plunging the iron on the board and slamming it on the metal rest.

"My father and mother came in a steerage, and I was born in our own house, Robey by Huron. I'm no dirty immigrant. I'm a US citizen. My husband is a gassed veteran from France with lungs weaker'n paper, that hardly can he go to the toilet by himself. These six children of mine, I have to buy the shoes for their feet with my own blood. Even a lousy little white communion necktie, that's a couple of drops of blood; a little piece of mosquito veil for my Vadja so she won't be ashamed in church for the other girls, they take my blood for it by Goldblatt. That's how I keep goin'. A fine thing if I had to depend on the Relief. And there's plenty of people on the rolls—fakes! There's nothin' *they* can't get, that can go and wrap bacon at Swift and Armour any time. They're lookin' for them by the Yards. They never have to be out of work. Only they rather lay in their lousy beds and eat the taxpayers' money." She was not afraid, in a predominantly Negro station, to shout this way about Negroes.

Grebe pressed himself forward to get a nearer view of the woman. She was flaming with anger and with pleasure at herself, broad and huge, a golden-headed woman who wore a cotton cap laced with pink ribbon. She was barelegged and had on black gym-shoes, her hoover apron was open and

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her great breasts, not much restrained by a man's undershirt, hampered her arms as she worked at the kid's dress on the ironing board. And the children, silent and white, with a kind of locked obstinacy, in sheepskins and lumberjackets, stood behind her. She had captured the station, and the pleasure it gave her was enormous. Yet her grievances were true grievances, if wrongly aimed, and she put the whole force of her spirit into them. But she attacked with her voice. Her small eyes she kept averted, and her look was hidden, so that she seemed to be spinning and planning as she raged.

"They send me out college case-workers in silk panties to talk me out of what I got comin'. Are they better 'n me? Who told them? Fire them. Let 'em go and get married, and then you won't have to cut electric from folks' budget."

The chief supervisor, Mr. Ewing, could not silence her and he stood with folded arms at the head of his staff, bald, trying to appear mocking, saying to his subordinates like the ex-school principal he was, "Pretty soon she'll be tired and go."

"Nothing doing," said Raynor to Grebe. "She'll get what she wants. She knows more about the Relief even than Ewing. She's been on the rolls for years, and she always gets what she wants because she puts on a noisy show. Ewing knows it. He'll give in soon. He's only saving face. If he gets bad publicity, the Commissioner'll have him on the carpet, downtown. She's got him submerged; she'll submerge everybody in time, and that includes nations and governments." Grebe replied with his characteristic smile, disagreeing completely. Who would ever take Staika's orders, and what changes could her yelling bring about?

NO, WHAT Grebe saw in her, the power that made her a real center of attention, and made obedient and attracted people listen, was that her cry expressed the war of flesh and blood, made a little crazy and intensely ugly, on place and condition. And at first, when he went out, she somehow presided over the whole district for him, and it took color from her; literally her color, in the spotty curb-fires, and the fires under the El, the straight alley of flamey gloom. Later too, when he went into a tavern for a shot of rye, the sweat of beer, by way of West Side Polish streets, led him to think of her again.

He wiped the corners of his mouth with his muffler, his handkerchief being too deep in his pocket to reach for, and went out again to get on with the delivery of his checks. The air bit cold and hard and a few flakes of snow formed near him. A train struck by and left a quiver in the frames and a bristling icy hiss over the rails.

Crossing the street, he descended a flight of board steps into a basement grocery, setting off a little bell. It was a dark, long store and it caught you with its stinks of smoked meat, soap, dried peaches, and fish. There was a fire wrinkling and flapping in the little stove, and the proprietor was waiting, an Italian with a long, hollow face and stubborn bristles. He kept his hands warm under his apron.

No, he didn't know Green. You knew people, but not names. The same man might not have the same name twice. The police didn't know, either, and mostly didn't care. When somebody was shot or knifed they took the body away and didn't look for the murderer. In the first place, nobody would tell them anything. So they made up a name for the coroner and called it quits. And in the second place, they didn't give a goddam anyhow. But they couldn't get to the bottom of a thing even if they wanted to. Nobody would get to know even a tenth of what went on among these people. They stabbed and stole, they did every corrupt thing you ever heard of, men and men, women and women, parents and children, worse than the animals. They carried on their own way, and the crimes passed off like a smoke. There was never anything like it in the history of the world.

It was a long speech, deepening with every word in its fantasy and passion and becoming increasingly senseless and terrible: a swarm amassed by suggestion and by steady invention, a huge, hugging, despairing knot, a human wheel rolling through his shop.

Grebe felt that he must interrupt him. He said, sharply, "What are you talking about! All I asked was whether you knew this man."

"That isn't even the half of it. I been here six years. You probably don't want to believe this. But suppose it's true?"

"All the same," said Grebe, "there must be a way to find a person."

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The Italian's close-spaced eyes had been queerly concentrated, as were his muscles, while he leaned across the counter trying to convince Grebe. Now he gave up the effort and sat down on his stool. "Oh . . . I suppose. Once in a while. But I been telling you, even the cops don't get anywhere."

"They're always after somebody. It's not the same thing."

"Well, keep trying if you want. I can't help you."

But he didn't keep trying. He had no more time to spend on Green. He slipped Green's check to the back of the block. The next name on the list was FIELD, WINSTON.

HE FOUND the back-yard bungalow without the least trouble; it shared a lot with another house, a few feet of yard between. Grebe knew these two-shack arrangements. They had been built in vast numbers in the days before the swamps were filled and the streets raised, and they were all the same—a boardwalk along the fence, well under street level, three or four ball-headed posts for clotheslines, greening wood, dead shingles, and a long, long flight of stairs to the rear door.

A twelve-year-old boy let him into the kitchen, and there the old man was sitting by the table in a wheel chair.

"Oh, it's d' government man," he said to the boy when Grebe drew out his checks. "Go bring me my box of papers." He cleared a space on the table.

"Oh, you don't have to go to all that trouble," said Grebe. But Field laid out his papers: Social Security card, Relief certification, letters from the state hospital in Manteno and a naval discharge dated San Diego, 1920.

"That's plenty," Grebe said. "Just sign."

"You got to know who I am," the old man said. "You're from the government. It's not your check, it's a government check and you got no business to hand it over till everything is proved."

He loved the ceremony of it, and Grebe made no more objections. Field emptied his box and finished out the circle of cards and letters.

"There's everything I done and been. Just the death certificate and they can close book on me." He said this with a certain happy pride and magnificence. Still he did not sign; he merely held the little pen upright on the golden green corduroy of his thigh. Grebe did not hurry him. He felt the old man's hunger for conversation.

"I got to get better coal," he said. "I send my little gran'son to the yard with my order and they fill his wagon with screening. The stove ain't made for it. It fall through the grate. The order says Franklin County egg-size coal."

"I'll report it and see what can be done."

"Nothing can be done, I expect. You know and I know. There ain't no little ways to make things better, and the only big thing is money. That's the only sunbeams, money. Nothing is black where it shines, and the only place you see black is where it ain't shining. What we colored have to have is our own rich. There ain't no other way."

GREBE sat, his reddened forehead bridged levelly by his close-cut hair and his cheeks lowered in the wings of his collar—the caked fire shone hard within the isinglass and iron frames but the room was not comfortable—sat and listened while the old man unfolded his scheme. This was to create one Negro millionaire a month by subscription. One clever, good-hearted young fellow elected every month would sign a contract to use the money to start a business employing Negroes. This would be advertised by chain-letters and word of mouth, and every Negro wage-earner would contribute a dollar a month. Within five years there would be sixty millionaires.

"That'll fetch respect," he said with a throat-stopped sound that came out like a foreign syllable. "You got to take and organize all the money that gets thrown away on the policy wheel and horse race. As long as they can take it away from you, they got no respect for you. Money, that's d' sun of human kind!" Field was a Negro of mixed blood, perhaps Cherokee, or Natchez; his skin was reddish. And he sounded, speaking about a golden sun in this dark room, and looked, shaggy and slab-headed, with the mingled blood of his face and broad lips, the little pen still upright in his hand, like one of the underground kings of mythology, the old judging Minos himself.

And now he accepted the check and signed. Not to soil the slip, he held it down with his knuckles. The table budged and

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creaked, the center of the gloomy, heathen midden of the kitchen covered with bread, meat, and cans, and the scramble of papers.

"Don't you think my scheme'd work?"

"It's worth thinking about. Something ought to be done, I agree."

"It'll work if people will do it. That's all. That's the only thing, anytime. When they understand it in the same way, all of them."

"That's true," said Grebe, rising. His glance met the old man's.

"I know you got to go," he said. "Well, God bless you, boy, you ain't been sly with me. I can tell it in a minute."

He went back through the buried yard. Someone nursed a candle in a shed, where a man unloaded kindling wood from a sprawl-wheeled baby buggy and two voices carried on a high conversation. As he came up the sheltered passage he heard the hard boost of the wind in the branches and against the house fronts, and then, reaching the sidewalk, he saw the needle-eye red of cable towers in the open icy height hundreds of feet above the river and the factories: those keen points. From here, his view was unobstructed all the way to the South Branch and its timber banks, and the cranes beside the water. Rebuilt after the Great Fire, this part of the city was, not fifty years later, in ruins again, factories boarded up, buildings deserted or fallen, gaps of prairie between. But it wasn't desolation that this made you feel, but rather a faltering of organization that set free a huge energy, an escaped, unattached, unregulated power from the giant raw place. Not only must people feel it but, it seemed to Grebe, they were compelled to match it. In their very bodies. He no less than others, he realized. Say that his parents had been servants in their time, whereas he was not supposed to be one. He thought that they had never owed any service like this, which no one visible asked and probably flesh and blood could not even perform. Nor could anyone show why it should be performed; or see what the performance would lead to. That did not mean that he wanted to be released from it, he realized with a grimly pensive face. On the contrary. He had something to do. To be compelled to feel this energy and yet have nothing to do—that was horrible; that was suffering; he knew what that was. It was now quitting time. Six o'clock. He could go home if he liked, to his room, that is, to wash in hot water, to pour a drink, lie down on his quilt, read the paper, eat some liver paste on crackers before going out to dinner. But to think of this actually made him feel a little sick, as though he had swallowed hard air. He had six checks left, and he was determined to deliver at least one of these: Mr. Green's check.

So he started. He had four or five dark blocks to go, past open lots, condemned houses, old foundations, closed schools, black churches, mounds, and he reflected that there must be many people alive who had once seen the neighborhood rebuilt and new. Now there was a second layer of ruins; centuries of history accomplished through human massing. Numbers had given the place forced growth; enormous numbers had also broken it down. Objects once so new, so concrete that it could never have occurred to anyone they stood for other things, had crumbled. Therefore, reflected Grebe, the secret of them was out. It was that they stood for themselves by agreement, and were natural and not unnatural by agreement, and when the things themselves collapsed the agreement became visible. What was it, otherwise, that kept cities from looking peculiar? Rome, that was almost permanent, did not give rise to thoughts like these. And was it abidingly real? But in Chicago, where the cycles were so fast and the familiar died, and rose changed, and died again in thirty years, you saw the common agreement or covenant, and you were forced to think about appearances and realities. —He remembered Raynor and he smiled; that was a clever boy—. Once you saw that a great many things became intelligible. For instance, why Mr. Field should conceive such a scheme. Of course, if people were to agree to create a millionaire, a real millionaire would come into existence. And if you wanted to know how Mr. Field was inspired to think of this, why, he had within sight of his kitchen window the chart, the very bones of a successful scheme—the El with its blue and green confetti of signals. People consenting to pay dimes and ride the crash-box cars, it was a success. Yet how absurd it looked; how little real to start with. And yet Yerkes, the great financier

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who built it, had known that he could get people to agree to its reality. Viewed as itself, what a scheme of a scheme it seemed, how close to an appearance. Then why wonder at Mr. Field's idea? He had grasped a principle. And then Grebe remembered, too, that Mr. Yerkes had established the Yerkes Observatory and endowed it with millions. Now why did the notion reach him in his New York museum of a palace or his Aegean-bound yacht to give money to astronomers? Was he awed perhaps by the success of his bizarre enterprise and therefore ready to spend money to find out where in the universe being and seeming were identical? Yes, he wanted to know what abides; and is flesh Bible-grass; and offered money to be burned in the fire of suns. Okay, then, Grebe thought further, these things exist because people consent to exist with them—we have got so far—and also there is a reality which doesn't depend on consent but within which consent is a game. But what about need, the need that keeps so many vast thousands in position? You tell me that, you private little gentleman and *decent* soul—he used these words against himself scornfully. Why is the consent given to misery? And why so painfully ugly? Because there *is something* that is dismal and permanently ugly? Here he sighed and gave it up, and thought it was enough for the present moment that he had a real check in his pocket for a Mr. Green who could be real beyond question. If only his neighbors didn't think they had to conceal him.

THIS time he stopped at the second floor. He struck a match and found a door. Presently a man answered his knock and Grebe had the check ready and showed it even before he began. "Does Tulliver Green live here? I'm from the Relief."

The man narrowed the opening and spoke to someone at his back.

"Does he live here?"

"Uh-unh. No."

"Or anywhere in this building? He's a sick man and he can't come for his dough." He held the check up into the light, which was smoky and smelled of charred lard, and the man held off the brim of his cap to study it.

"Uh-unh. Never seen the name."

"There's nobody around here that uses crutches?"

He seemed to think, but it was Grebe's impression that he was simply waiting for a decent interval to pass.

"No, suh. Nobody I ever see."

"I've been looking for this man all afternoon," Grebe spoke out with sudden force, "and I'm going to have to carry this check back to the station. It seems strange not to be able to find a person to *give* him something when you're looking for him for a good reason. I suppose if I had bad news for him I'd find him quick enough."

There was a responsive motion in the other man's face. "That's right, I reckon."

"It almost doesn't do any good to have a name if you can't be found by it. It doesn't stand for anything. He might as well not have any," he went on, smiling. It was as much of a concession as he could make to his great desire to laugh.

"Well, now, there's a little old knot-back man I see once in a while. He might be the one you lookin' for. Downstairs."

"Where? Right side or left? Which door?"

"I don't know which. Thin face little knot-back with a stick."

BUT no one answered at any of the doors on the first floor. He went to the end of the corridor, searching by matchlight, and found only a stairless exit to the yard, a drop of about six feet. But there was a bungalow near the alley, an old house like Mr. Field's. To jump was unsafe. He ran from the front door, through the underground passage and into the yard. The place was occupied. There was a light through the curtains, upstairs. The name on the ticket under the broken, scoop-shaped mailbox was Green! He exultantly rang the bell and pressed against the locked door. Then the lock clicked faintly and a long staircase opened before him. Someone was slowly coming down—a woman. He had the impression in the weak light that she was shaping her hair as she came, making herself presentable, for he saw her arms raised. But it was for support that they were raised; she was feeling her way downward, down the walls, stumbling. Next he wondered about the pressure of her feet on the treads; she did not seem to be wearing shoes. And it was a freezing stairway. His ring

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had got her out of bed, perhaps, and she had forgotten to put them on. And then he saw that she was not only shoeless but naked; she was entirely naked, blundering down and talking to herself, a heavy woman, naked and drunk. The contact of her breasts on his coat made him go back against the door with a blind, rousing shock. See what he had tracked down, in his hunting game! He hadn't reckoned with such prey. The woman was saying to herself, furious with insult, "So I cain't ——, huh? I'll show that —— kin' I, cain't I."

WHAT should he do now? Why, he should go. He should turn and go. He could not talk to this woman. He could not keep her standing naked in the cold. However, he could not go. He could not acknowledge that what he had found was too much for him.

He said, "Is this where Mr. Green lives?"

But she was still talking to herself and did not hear him.

"Is this Mr. Green's house?"

At last she turned her furious drunken glance on him. "What do you want?"

Again her eyes wandered from him, a dark wink of blood in their enraged brilliance. He wondered that she didn't feel the cold.

"I'm from the Relief."

"Awright, what?"

"I've got a check for Tulliver Green."

This time she heard him and put out her hand.

"No, no, for *Mister* Green. He's got to sign," he said ridiculously. How was he going to get Green's signature tonight!

"I'll take it."

He desperately shook his head, thinking of Mr. Field's precautions about identification. "I can't let you have it. It's for him. Is he upstairs?"

"Awright. Take it up yourself, you goddam fool."

Yes, he was a goddamned fool. Of course he could not go up. Green would be drunk and naked, too. And perhaps he would appear on the landing soon. He looked eagerly up to the narrow height of the green wall. Empty! It remained empty!

"Hell with you, then!" he heard her cry and suddenly saw, with burning self-ridicule, how far his desire had carried him. Then why didn't he leave? He made ready to go.

"I'll come tomorrow, tell him."

"Ah, hell with you. Don' never come. What you doin' here in the night-time. Don' come back." She yelled so that he saw the breadth of her tongue. She stood astride in the long cold box of the hall and held on to the bannister and the wall. The bungalow itself was shaped something like a box, an immense sentry box pointing into the freezing air and sharp, wintry lights.

"If you are Mrs. Green, I'll give you the check," he said, changing his mind.

"Give here, then." She took it, took the pen offered with it in her left hand, and tried to write on the wall. He looked around, almost as though to see whether his madness was being observed, and came near believing that someone was standing on a mountain of used tires in the auto-junking shop next door.

"But are you Mrs. Green?" he now thought to ask. But she was already climbing the stairs with the check, and it was too late, if he had made an error, if he was now in trouble, to undo the thing. However, a moment came, illuminated from the greatest height, when you could not refuse to yield a check, a municipal check, and therefore his worry stung him only superficially. Besides, though she might not be Mrs. Green, he was convinced that Mr. Green was upstairs. Whoever she was, the woman stood for Green whom this time he was not to see. "Well, you silly bastard," he said to himself, "so you found him. So what?" But it was important that there was a real Mr. Green whom they could not keep him from reaching because he seemed to come as an emissary from hostile appearances. And though the self-ridicule was slow to diminish, and his face, throat and chest, arms, his whole body blazed with it, he had, nevertheless, a reason for elation, too. "For after all," he said, "I *did* get to him."

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BRITISH JEWRY'S FAMILY NEWSPAPER

A Century of the "Jewish Chronicle"

MARK RAVEN

THE JEWISH CHRONICLE of London has published a centenary history of itself, celebrating its continuous publication since 1841. One senses in reading it not only a quiet satisfaction at the fact that, as it says, "no other Jewish periodical has celebrated its centenary," but also a feeling that to achieve a dignified age in this way is somehow a very British kind of thing to have done, giving the paper a pleasant fellowship with the other British periodicals that have, in the cricket phrase, "scored a century." *Punch,* for example, is an exact twin. The London *News-Chronicle,* five years younger, makes up for it through the fact that the first editor of its constituent *Daily News* was Charles Dickens. The *Economist* is but two years younger than the *Jewish Chronicle,* but had some mighty names to conjure with in *its* centenary volume, not least that of Walter Bagehot. A number of provincial papers have also passed the hundred-years mark. The *Manchester Guardian,* noblest of them all, is one hundred and twenty-nine years old as a continuous publication, though only ninety years old as a daily. It preferred to tell its history, when the time came, as the life of its great editor, C. P. Scott, who was in charge of the paper for the amazing period of fifty-eight years. All the big papers are, of course, junior to the *Times,* which appropriately took three solemn volumes to celebrate its 150th birthday in 1935. And the *Times* itself is a baby to the *Spectator,* founded in 1711 and still endeavoring to reflect in form and spirit the elegance of Addison and Steele.

To be sure, the *Jewish Chronicle* has moved in a narrower world. Yet, one would guess, the reason for its survival and stability lies not so much in its being Jewish as in the qualities which it shares with its long-lived British contemporaries. How can one explain the success that the British have in turning their papers into unchanging and undying national institutions?

AN OBVIOUS explanation would lean on the fact that Britain itself grew up quite steadily and soberly during the past one hundred and fifty years, and that the papers grew with it. The almost unbroken peace and expanding prosperity that Britain enjoyed, from 1815 to 1914 particularly, allowed all kinds of institutions, including the papers—and including the monarchy—to assume a mantle of unshakeable eternity. Even though many of these institutions went through phases of instability during the 19th century, those that survived seem to the men and women who grew up after 1914 to be part of an age in which everything began, almost, by being a hundred years old.

Yet this cannot be the whole explanation. The distinctive character of British newspapers, in particular, lies not so much in any tradition of Victorian optimism or steadily expanding wealth, but rather in the peculiar intimacy with which they speak to the nation as a whole. The odd fact is that all these papers are in effect "family" papers, as wide as the nation in their outlook, international in their news coverage, yet parochial and intimate in tone. In all of them, despite the

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THE London *Jewish Chronicle*—the respected mother (or great-aunt) of Anglo-Jewish journalism (including the American)—has belatedly (because of the war) celebrated its centennial with the publication of an appropriate volume: *The Jewish Chronicle, 1841-1941: A Century of Newspaper History* (187 pp., 15 shillings). In this article, MARK RAVEN attempts to analyze what makes the *Chronicle* what it is, and why it is that way. Mark Raven is the pen name of an English writer who will be remembered by our readers for his poignant story, "Malcah and Sedgewick," in the November 1950 issue.

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differences of party and class which they express, there is an accepted feeling that the nation itself is a closely knit, almost a family, association, and that the affairs of the community—whether in Parliament or in industry or in sport—are of direct interest to all sections of that community. It is assumed that "everybody knows everybody" and that the country is old enough to recognize that its citizens have many evocative memories and family jokes in common.

One can see the practical expression of this sense of community in the fact that the chief newspapers of Britain are all nationwide in their service, available on every breakfast table in the country at the same moment. There are, of course, many purely local newspapers too, both daily and weekly; but the dominant newspaper influences in forming public opinion are the national papers, pitched, of course, at different levels, yet, when taken together, forming a network of homogeneity over the country. And if the voice of the BBC is added—the wise old uncle talking to rich and poor alike—the picture of intimate familiarity is complete.

Only against this national "family" background can one correctly evaluate the character and influence of the *Jewish Chronicle* and the significance of its centenary. The Jewish community in Britain is a microcosm of the larger community. As ordinary citizens the Jews—even second-generation immigrants—are so deeply committed to their British background that they often seem to their fellow Jews in other countries to be too unapproachably British for words. Yet in running their Jewish affairs within Britain they have a parallel sense of identification with the whole of Jewry—a feeling of mutual responsibility—which is equally astonishing.

It is through the combination of these two complementary attitudes that the *Jewish Chronicle,* a nationwide newspaper for all the Jews of Britain, has survived its early vicissitudes and is now running nine years into its second century. If it is remarkable that the United States, the heartland of business and economics, should have no national periodical remotely resembling the *Economist,* it is no less remarkable that the United States, with its five million Jews, should have no newspaper resembling, in its national character, the *Jewish Chronicle.*

Like the *Economist,* the *Jewish Chronicle* combines a minute concentration on the affairs of the community as a whole with first-rate correspondence from abroad. In both cases, the foreign news service has made the papers of unique value in their respective fields throughout the world. The front page of the current *Jewish Chronicle* is almost always devoted exclusively to news stories from abroad. These, and special articles within the paper on Jewish subjects in the broadest sense, bring together information that is found collected nowhere else in English, perhaps not in any language. Interspersed with this is a mass of advertising, personal and commercial, a detailed coverage of the internal affairs of every synagogue and Jewish community in the country, and a series of high-minded editorials, echoing—or striving to echo—in their comment on Jewish affairs, the dignified tone of the *Times* itself.

Since everything remotely connected with Jewish life or individual Jews in Britain is mentioned in some way in the *Chronicle,* its most obvious function, in the less serious sense, is to serve as a sounding board for the "family gossip" of British Jewry. Yet this does not imply, as might be expected, that the Jews of Britain are "narrower" in their outlook or more restricted in their activities than the Jews of other countries. The contrary is more probably the truth. The *Chronicle* merely intensifies that aspect of their life which they share with their fellow Jews. And since the sense of interdependence is greatly developed in all things within Britain, the character of the *Chronicle* both derives from and itself enriches the community sense of British Jewry.

Not that all has been sweetness and light for one hundred and nine years. On the contrary, the pages of this centenary volume reflect a series of constant battles—the Jews'

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own fight with their neighbors for equality, the struggles among different groups of Jews, the constant searchings of heart of the individual Jew in trying to solve the problems that refuse to be solved. If there is any satisfaction, it lies in the drama of battle itself, and in an unconquerable optimism that lends purpose to the fight.

LOOKING back over a hundred years, the big political issues always stand out boldly. With the editorials ringing in our ears, it seems as though the problems of the world were always going to be solved when a specific political battle was won. Never was this clearer than in the long battle which took place in the middle of the 19th century on the right of a British Jew to sit in Parliament. It was in the *Jewish Chronicle* of January 22, 1847, as recorded in this volume, that the rumor was first mentioned that "at the forthcoming General Election, three Jews intend to offer themselves for election." In fact, the number of Jewish candidates was five. Only one, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, was returned at the head of the poll, and then began the struggle to make it legally possible for him to take his seat (representing the City of London) despite his refusal to take oath, as required, "on the true faith of a Christian." For more than ten years the struggle raged, with the *Jewish Chronicle* putting the case for full equality of citizenship in one vigorous article after another. The triumph enjoyed by the whole community when, in 1858, Parliament finally amended the oath and permitted Lionel de Rothschild to take his seat, seemed like the dawn of a new era.

But these new eras have dawned and faded and dawned again many times in the course of a hundred years. Against the growing emancipation and influence of the Jewish community within Britain, the *Chronicle* viewed with horror and fought with vehemence the earlier pogroms in Russia and other countries, lauded freedom when it seemed to be within reach after World War I, and then had to marshal all its strength and influence against the monstrosities of postwar Poland and the barbarism of Nazi Germany. Cutting across this familiar fight for political rights lay the unique phenomenon of Zionism. In the early days, when Herzl was striving to convert leaders of British opinion to his program, Zionism was not acceptable as a philosophy to the *Jewish Chronicle*. Herzl's views, and the developments at Zionist Congresses, were reported in full, but the editor was careful to point out that "we still regard Zionism as ill-considered, retrogressive, impracticable, even dangerous." Later, the *Chronicle* was purchased by a different group and became a powerful influence for spreading the belief in Zionism. But the travail—as well as the triumph—of Zionism left its mark on the internal community. The unity on broad questions of policy that had lasted for many years split on the question of the degree of commitment to the Zionist faith. Only now, with some of the basic problems eased, is there felt, throughout the whole community, a strong desire to "heal the rift."

BUT whereas the emphasis in a Jewish newspaper today seems, by an irony of history, to be given over to the primitive problem of Jewish survival, the Victorian editor—no less doughty in the struggle for Jewish rights—could at the same time devote a great deal of space to the inner problems of life, the search for a personal faith, the defense of the faith against doubt and attack. The *Chronicle* still prints a weekly sermon and numerous articles on religious questions, but gone is the amplitude of Victorian days when purely religious or religio-historical questions were explored week by week with a detail and concentration that seems to have almost no parallel of any kind in modern life. A sermon by the Chief Rabbi was announced in advance as a forthcoming attraction, and then, when it had been delivered, was printed in full and discussed editorially. The Jewish scholars of the day, ploughing up new fields that have since yielded ample harvests, contributed translations of medieval poetry and philosophy. More popular writers provided serialized accounts of Jewish his-

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tory, and even novels on Jewish themes in numerous instalments. In later years, writers like Israel Abrahams and Solomon Schechter were able in the pages of the *Chronicle* to combine deep erudition and a fascinating simplicity and charm.

To the Victorians, religious controversy was the breath of life, and it was to the taste of his readers that Dr. Abraham Benisch, editor of the *Chronicle* throughout its formative period from 1855 to 1869 and again from 1875 to 1878, conducted vigorous arguments not only with Jewish but also with Christian scholars, collecting and republishing them separately under such titles as: *The Principal Charges of Dr. McCaul's Old Paths Against Judaism as stated by Mr. Newdegate in the House of Commons considered and answered* (1858), or *Bishop Colenso's Objections to the Historical Character of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua . . . critically Examined* (1863).

Yet even if the somewhat archaic character of these controversies may have passed away from the *Chronicle*, it has remained throughout the years a sounding board for the eternal questions that come up for every Jew, and that seem perhaps impossible ever to solve. The first Reform synagogue was founded in England in 1840, a year before the *Chronicle* made its debut, and the problem of "Orthodoxy versus Reform Judaism" has been debated constantly in the pages of the *Chronicle* for all this period in the same terms and with the same fundamental irreconcilability. Even more deeply, the problem of complete assimilation has been a constant question mark. Against the "liberal" background of the 19th century, assimilation seemed to many a constructive solution to an "out-of-date" dilemma; against the persistent recurrence of persecution it seemed at least a safety device. Combating all these tendencies, the *Chronicle* put forward always a positive attitude to Judaism itself; yet assimilation went on, finding new forms and new excuses.

The latest example of a sharp controversy on this subject took place as recently as early in 1950, around an interview that Arthur Koestler gave to a representative of the *Chronicle*, in which he advanced once again his view that all Jews in the Diaspora who did not emigrate to Israel and become Israeli citizens should deliberately assimilate, as he himself is now doing, fitting in, in every way, to their non-Jewish environment—including teaching their children the "dominant" religion in their country—and severing every link with their now "meaningless" Jewish past. A flood of outraged letters in the issues which followed this interview gave adequate expression to the feeling in Britain that being Jewish has some very positive meaning both in relation to a set of religious beliefs and to every Jew's personal "folk history."

The oddest thing to the historian is that Koestler should think that the issue had suddenly arisen because of the creation of the State of Israel. The same problem has been discussed in what amounts to the same terms for generations, if only because it has been a constant phenomenon in a small sector of Jewish life. It is more than likely that nothing in all the letters which appeared after the Koestler interview added anything fundamental to a series of thirty-three articles which Benisch wrote as editor in the 70's, and republished in 1878 under the title: *Why I Should Remain a Jew.*

But if serious discussion and self-examination have been the staple diet of the *Chronicle* for one hundred and nine years, one can also turn to this centenary volume for antiquarian interest and for the light entertainment that small wrangles always provide—in retrospect. On the antiquarian side, the advertisements alone, especially in early Victorian days, have a flavor of their own. It is advertised that a portrait of the newly elected Chief Rabbi, engraved on stone, has been published; that Miss Isaacs, a pupil of Monsieur E. Coulon, respectfully thanks her friends and the public generally for their patronage, and informs them that her Academy for Dancing and Deportment will shortly reopen; that there is a separate smoking room at Mr. Levin's Boarding and Lodging House

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in Bury Street, St. Mary Axe, where an Ordinary is served every day at one and two o'clock; that Mr. Caleb C. Portman requires immediately a money partner, Israelite or Christian, of true Scripture principles, who could advance from £1,000 to £5,000 to purchase land and build an edifice in Birmingham to be called the Millenium Sanctuary. One can follow the prodigious history of Sir Moses Montefiore, fearless defender of Jews in every country of the world, and sympathize perhaps with his tireless scholar-companion Dr. Loewe, who was, in his other capacity, "Oriental Interpreter to the Duke of Sussex." And however strong the tendency has been in Britain, as elsewhere, for Jews to wander from the fold, one can still trace in reports of meetings and movements the same family names of Anglo-Jewish leaders, who continue to feel, though perhaps they could not define, their identification with the community.

That this feeling of identification has survived the unending communal fights of a hundred years is perhaps the clearest evidence that the community is, after all, a family. The struggle for control of the *Chronicle* itself has been repeated in a number of generations, though not today with the same charming frankness displayed in the early Victorian days, when, after a quarrel between the publisher and his "erudite but erratic" editor, Marcus Heymann Bresslau, a notice could be published, in the issue of July 28, 1848, stating: "It is most particularly requested that NO MONEY be paid to Mr. M. H. Bresslau on account of THE JEWISH CHRONICLE, he having long ceased to be in the employment of the Proprietor." Perhaps it is healthy to bring quarrels into the open. At any rate, the issue of September 27 in the same year carried a happier announcement, informing the subscribers that Mr. M. H. Bresslau would resume the Editorship with the next number, "the misunderstanding between that Gentleman and the Proprietor having been cleared up to the entire satisfaction of both parties."

The squabbles of those early days seem very parochial, yet no more so than reports in current issues when seen from a distance of three thousand miles. Opening the paper at random, one reads in the issue of April 21, 1950, of "Another Turbulent Meeting" at the Federation of Synagogues, with the President resigning "as the climax of an extremely heated session marked by continual uproar and punctuated by ineffectual and at times scarcely audible appeals for order." The trouble seems to have arisen over a resolution proposed by a member of the Council calling for the resignation of the Treasurer, which the President (who was in the chair) maintained was not in order. His ruling being challenged, a vote of confidence had to be taken, but, runs the report, "for well over an hour, despite attempts to preserve some semblance of order, there was almost continuous disorder and pandemonium. Even after the vote had been taken—as far as it could be ascertained there appeared to be 67 against the President and 46 for him—delegates protested that they had not been clearly instructed on the voting issue. At this stage, the Chairman said: 'I have come to the decision that my health is dearer to me than any organization. In consequence of this, you will accept my resignation.' He stated that as a result of the previous Friday's meeting, he had been advised by his doctor to consult a specialist, and had had to have three injections. He would have to take a health cure at the end of May, and had been told that his health would worsen with the years." From across the Atlantic, one feels impelled to send this sorely tried servant of the public the sincerest wishes for recovery.

THIS, then, is the *Jewish Chronicle* of London—as British as Yorkshire pudding and as Jewish as *gefilte* fish. Does anything in its long history and beneficent influence suggest any ready-made formula for the Jewish communities of other countries?

Perhaps the only effective reply is to quote the old Jewish quip on how to live long: "Drink *borsht* for a hundred years." For here we must refer again to the historical background, the social and political stability of Britain during a long period, which en-

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abled such institutions as the *Chronicle* to take root and flourish. There also seems to be some special quality arising out of life within a small community which may not be easily exportable. A small nation may be physically weak in a trial of strength, and may lack the economic resources on which unlimited expansion and experiment depend. Yet it can provide its citizens with a feeling of identification which has its own satisfactions and is, to some extent, a special formula for strength.

Not that stability and a national sense of neighborliness are qualities that are complete goods in themselves. Stability can be rigidity, which is a dangerous state of health. And as for neighborliness, Alfred Zimmern—of the *Greek Commonwealth*—says somewhere: "There is no tyranny like the tyranny of near neighbours. The smaller the group, the tighter its stranglehold over your life and activities."

Perhaps Britain suffers from these drawbacks, and within Britain, perhaps this applies also to the Jewish community. In compensation, they at least enjoy also the pleasanter side of the medal. A citizen of Britain has a great feeling of being at home wherever he is in the country—and at home with the past as well as the present. He has a feeling also that, despite the sharp quarrels of party and class, there is at work within the country a powerful sense of the public interest, linked directly to the fact that the individual is identified with the whole. Something of this spirit has certainly been carried down into the Jewish community within Britain, and, in a way difficult to define, this is perhaps the long-life formula of the *Jewish Chronicle*.

TWO POEMS

DAVID IGNATOW

The Junkman

THE odds and ends, the leftovers,
slightly rotted, too big or too short,
too thin or too wide, he gathers them up,
dumped upon his land; no sign reading,
"Dumping Forbidden." He pulled it down,
putting in place, "Dumping Invited,"
with the malingering odor of disuse.
In it up to his neck, standing still,
he receives them; all of a kind in one spot,
all of another elsewhere—bringing like
together for strength. Every broken,
falling-apart scrap a place to fit in,
and all coming together a shape upon the
land.

The Business Life

WHEN someone hangs up, having said
to you, "Don't come around again,"
and you have never heard the phone
bang down with such violence
nor the voice vibrate with such venom,
pick up your receiver gently and dial
again, get the same reply; and dial
again, until he threatens. You will
then get used to it, and be sick only
instead of shocked. You will live
then instead of die, have a pattern
to go by, familiar to your ear,
your senses and your dignity.

DAVID IGNATOW has had several poems in COMMENTARY, most recently "After the Storm" and "Summer," in the July 1950 issue. A book of his poetry was put out by the Decker Press (1948).

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WHAT'S COOKING IN TEL AVIV

An Eggplant in Every Pot

There's Always Lebeniah

SARAH C. SCHACK

ISRAELI canned *gefilte* fish is good, its chocolate is good, its oranges are famous, even its canned *sabras* (prickly pears) are fine—if you can get them. You can get them on Fifth Avenue for dollars and cents, but not in the groceries of Tel Aviv for pounds and piasters. In spite of a very considerable increase in agricultural production, Israelis are foregoing their own canned fish and *sabras*, chocolate, 80 per cent of their oranges and grapefruit, mulberry jam, olive oil, and pickles, in order to trade them for dollars. They are also doing without most foreign foods—meat, poultry, butter, eggs, "appetizings" (except herring), most vegetables and fruit—fresh, dried, canned, or frozen. What's left?

Well, there is always *lebeniah*.

A story current in Israel says that President Truman has offered to trade the know-how of the atom bomb for the secret of *lebeniah*. There's no chance of the deal going through. Israel can't afford it. An atom bomb may have lots of energy. But it lacks vitamins.

According to the Hebrew dictionary, *lebeniah* stems from the Arabic word *leben* (soured goat's milk). That is what dictionaries know about it. Israelis think it might more appropriately be derived from the German *Leben*, meaning "life." Actually, it is a tasty fermented powdered milk. Together with cottage cheese, it is the basis of the Israeli diet. Depending on the season, a menu in Israel consists of *lebeniah*, cottage cheese, and green peppers; *lebeniah*, cottage cheese, cauliflower, *kussa* (vegetable marrow), and cucumbers . . . *lebeniah* . . . *lebeniah* . . . together with black bread, some milk, some rice, potatoes, noodles (the last three not always available), and margarine.

There is fish, too, not very popular, for it's either *fillet* (frozen fish imported from Norway or Turkey) or carp—*carpionim* (6- to 8-inch hydrocephalic carplets) raised in the domestic hatcheries. In a home I visited, two *carpionim* swam in the bathtub for a week before they became the main course of a Rosh Hashanah dinner. There are dried beans and peas (vegetable soup is usually bean soup). There is also a taste of fruit around—one kind at a time. The *mishmish* (apricot) has a brief season, plums a slightly longer one, yellow melons and watermelons a still longer one. Grapes, figs, and pomegranates came and went like a flash this last year. Last August I succeeded in buying *one* huge, beautiful peach in a vegetable store—not on the black market.

EVERY woman and most men carry briefcases or shopping bags (mostly nets) on their way anywhere at all. Maybe they will be able to pick up a watermelon, a bit of sweets, a box of sardines, a few apples. This, after having already stood in line for their rations at the separate stores designated in their ration books. Wait for a Tel Aviv bus bound for the shopping center and fifteen yards of people dangling nets wait with you. Stand in line for the return trip and there are fifteen yards of nets with you—most of them full of green peppers. Since wrapping paper is practically nonexistent—and it's tissue-thin when it is available—it is not uncommon to see fish in the company of the peppers and a few

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THE close association between Jewishness and mama's cooking—or, at least, grandma's cooking—has led many American observers, especially the hungrier ones, to feel that the austerity of the Israeli cuisine, a result of serious food shortages, may constitute a threat to the very survival of the Jewish spirit: how can a Jew be expected to carry on without boiled beef *flanken* and chopped chicken liver? SARAH C. SCHACK and M. TSANIN here offer some reassurance; necessity, as usual, has been the mother of invention. Mrs. Schack, sustained by *lebeniah*, spent some time in Israel last summer without undue hunger pangs. Mr. Tsanin is Israeli correspondent for the *Jewish Daily Forward*, and his report on the apotheosis of *tcholent* originally appeared in that newspaper; it has been translated from the Yiddish by Lucy S. Davidowicz.

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apples in those nets. I have even seen and sorrowed with an intelligent, well-dressed young woman in a crammed bus who brushed a few herrings wrapped in only one layer of thin newspaper against a correct German gentleman. His comments were correct for the occasion, too.

Every taxi driver is always on the lookout, especially outside the city, for something extra for the family table—a few lemons, a live chicken, a head of lettuce for a change, some watermelons. Especially last summer and fall, a handful of onions was a treat. What is the most welcome gift for a birthday or anniversary from a taxi driver or country cousin? A bunch of onions, a few grapefruit, and some eggs, besides the indispensable bouquet of flowers.

There are favored aristocrats around who don't have to forage so much for something to eat. It is handed to them. I do not mean the black market customers who pay I£2 (equivalent to $5.60) for a kilo (2.2 lbs.) of meat and I£1 ($2.80) for a kilo of sugar. I mean the soldiers, the children, the tourists, the aged, and the sick. They all get more eggs, more milk, more meat, some butter, a bar of chocolate occasionally, fresh and dried fruits. Diabetics are the luckiest —they are allowed meat every day and eggs almost as often. But they also have to return to the stores again and again, because supplies do not arrive on time and are quickly disposed of when they do arrive.

WHAT does all this ingathering stack up to on the table for three meals a day? Something like the following:

Breakfast: *salat* with *lebeniah,* pot cheese, tomatoes, and green peppers, coffee (you should excuse the expression), black bread, and margarine. Sometimes a cooked cereal is available instead of the *salat.* Some jam or some tiny olives may be thrown in.

Dinner at noon: soup, mostly bean or noodle, sometimes fruit soup (a euphemism for dilute jello), *fillet* of herring (chopped, fried, or boiled) or *carpionim* (mostly boiled), eggplant (fried, boiled, chopped, pickled—one booklet lists thirty recipes), rice or a potato if available, tea, and a sort of blancmange, or watermelon, or—rarely—cake. (Israeli cake deserves honorable mention, for it is generally produced out of nothing more than flour, a sprinkling of sesame seeds, a lick of jam, little sugar and less margarine, and—imagination.)

Supper: *salat* of pot cheese, green peppers, sometimes sardines, cucumbers and tomatoes with *lebeniah,* tea or coffee with a speck of milk.

On Saturday, the noon meal will probably have an "enriched" meat loaf of the family's entire weekly meat ration. On High Holidays maybe half a chicken will be allowed. What the housewife does with her two eggs a week per person I didn't inquire into too closely. As an American tourist, I had a most generous ration book, with twenty meat portions, twenty-eight eggs, and a whole kilo of sugar per month; and so I was a welcome *mitesser* in many homes where I left my *nekudot* (ration "dots"). Otherwise, one can readily surmise, very little mealtime entertaining is done.

Outside the home one would expect more variety. But what does one get most of the time in restaurant after restaurant, hotel after hotel? For breakfast: *salat* of pot cheese, etc., maybe some sardines, *lebeniah,* etc. And so on for dinner and supper.

With his extra ration points the tourist is of course entitled to meat and eggs almost every day. The eggs I got most of the time, but meat was served about twice a week. Several times in my eleven weeks' stay cooked plums or quinces or grapes turned up for dessert. On Rosh Hashanah a dish of prunes was a most welcome treat—one piaster extra—along with chicken or *rossbeef.* Sometimes a yellow cheese made of sheep's milk took the place of pot cheese (if you had the points for it). In the fanciest hotel one could still get orange or grapefruit juice. Another hotel served me for breakfast a tasty omelette made of powdered eggs, water, and patience.

In the street one could buy mostly plain soda water, *gazoz,* Alaskas or *glidah* (distant relatives of our Eskimo pie and ice-cream cones), *naknik* (would-be *wurst*?) sandwiches, *begelach,* and cheap sweets. Also *falafel:* sharp peppers and fried dried pea balls sandwiched in a flat roll called a *pitah. Falafel* is a standard meal around some urban and most interurban bus stops, where one spends a good part of one's life.

Prices are strictly controlled by the government. Each eating place is classified from "1" to "5-extra," in ascending cate-

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gories of elegance and excellence, mostly elegance. For every different item and amount of food and drink in every category the prescribed prices must be posted prominently. One well-known café in Jerusalem has a menu with 149 separate items and prices, aside from the multifarious strong drinks. What was I actually able to get there? For breakfast: *salat* of pot cheese with green peppers, *lebeniah,* etc. For dinner: soup, mostly with beans, etc. For supper: *salat* of pot cheese, *lebeniah,* etc., or *sardinim,* etc. But the prices were fair. A "No. 5" hotel in Haifa which charged I£1.400 a day for room and breakfast charged me a cent and a half extra for two slices of white bread I ordered instead of black bread. That was strictly according to law, too, even if funny.

BESIDES the aristocrats mentioned above, does any section of the population eat better? Yes, the people in most of the older *kibbutzim* and those who receive packages from abroad, chiefly the United States. In the last fifteen years production has increased to such an extent that some of the *kibbutzim* serve meals comparable to those of the average American farm. In a *kvutzah* fifteen years ago I remember many a breakfast, dinner, or supper of black bread, thick soup, mashed eggplant with a few olives in it, and pomegranates, or blancmange pudding. This year at the same *kvutzah* I had three good nourishing meals a day for nine days, with an egg and meat or fish every day, besides hard cheese, *lebeniah,* and more vegetables, raw and fresh, than I had anywhere else. All this, after the cream, chicken, milk, and fruit had been set aside for the children, the aged, the sick, and some deserving *chaverim.* A number of *kibbutzim* have enough good food to operate convalescent homes as a source of income. Most of them nearly always have many guests, especially on *Shabbat,* to share their good food: open house is part of their tradition. Yet even these communes are tightening their own belts to sell more products to the Tnuva cooperative. Last Rosh Hashanah there were even notices in the papers discouraging visitors.

Were you to ask the average Israeli housewife what she wants most, I rather think that on the spur of the moment she would ask first for a refrigerator, and then for a few American relatives. She would of course go right on to name many other things, but she would be sure to come back to American relatives. Now that the situation has become even worse than it was when I was there, it is hard to imagine what a package from America containing coffee, tea, sugar, prunes, dried apricots, butter, meat, chocolate, shelled nuts, soap, toilet tissue, and other of our plentiful necessities, does to a family in Israel—Spartan and uncomplaining though it may be. A good pianist and teacher told me in all seriousness that her morale would be immensely strengthened if someone would only send her dehydrated chicken noodle soup and Frizz ice-cream powder.

Meanwhile? Well, there's always *lebeniah* and *fillet* and. . . .

Tcholent to the Rescue

M. TSANIN

IT CAME about that the Lord, in his infinite wisdom, gave us a sovereign state, and now when we sit down to eat by ourselves, it turns out we must begin from the beginning to learn how to eat. All the *knishes, latkes, blintzes,* and *kreplach*—not to speak of *kugel, chremslech,* and *knaidlach*—are no more than chimeras of the dark *galut,* and we must reconsider what and how to cook and eat.

We Jews say: as the corpses eat, so they look. Or, if you prefer: he who dines well, lives well. Any housewife knows that what she feeds her husband determines his mood and zest for life. Just as this is true for an individual, so it is true for a nation. So, some weeks ago, a number of specialists and experts of our government's Nutritional Guidance Bureau got together in Jerusalem. Among them were chemists, dietitians, public leaders, and officials of the Ministry of Supplies. They met to confer on how we should prepare our food, and from what, so people wouldn't go around with long faces and complain they were chewing hay.

You may argue this is unnecessary; after all, anyone can put into his pot what he wants and cook it the way he wants. But you're making a mistake. Here we cannot

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put into the pot what we want, but what we're given. Furthermore, we are nowadays not molded from the same clay, but consist of about twenty tribes: Polish Jews, Bulgarian Jews, Yemenite Jews, Jews from Persia and Jews from Ethiopia, Jews from Afghanistan and Jews from Czechoslovakia, Jews from Turkey and Jews from Algeria, the Beni Israel of India and Bukharan Jews, and who knows how many other kinds from all the corners of the earth. Each tribe has its own cuisine. Suppose you say there is nothing better than a *challah* pudding. A Moroccan Jew will retort that eating a *challah* pudding is like chewing straw, but his potted beans with red pepper and cinnamon is the best dish in the world. A Yemenite will interrupt and scoff at both of you. He says that for some barley groats immersed in pepper he would give away all the hay that the Ashkenazim eat.

The Yemenite Jews do not in any case understand how one can eat the bread of the Ashkenazim. First of all, they say, it's not bread, but a featherbed of flour. Secondly, they do not understand how you can slice bread with a knife. With a knife an Arab cuts a Jew's throat, with a knife you slaughter a lamb. To use a knife for bread doesn't seem to them to be a Jewish trait at all. Slaughtering bread, they say, is certainly a trait adopted from the *goyim* and anyway the Ashkenazim are half *goyim*. The Yemenites, however, consider themselves to be the truest Jews and that's why they bake bread like the Arabs. Each one bakes his own bread. It is a kind of small flat cake with a soft crust called *pitah*. As soon as it is ready, you can open it like a rich man's pocket and stuff it with whatever you like: greens cooked in oil, a tooth of garlic, a red pepper, a radish soaked in vinegar, a bit of broiled onion, a twig of parsley. A Yemenite will try to convince you that a filling composed of all of these is the delicacy reserved in heaven for the pious.

On the other hand, a Bukharan will tell you that so long as he doesn't have a piece of lamb at the end of a skewer, and a glass of rum to go with it, he doesn't see the point of living. Here a Beni Israel arrives and ridicules all of you. A Beni Israel doesn't enjoy the taste of food unless a potato has been cooked in a pot of pepper with curry and ginger (if an Ashkenazi ate it, he would have to run to the fire department to extinguish the fire in his mouth). Then, the Ethiopian Jews—they bake some kind of cake which at first taste seems like an old wives' remedy for constipation, then you think it some kind of medicine for whooping cough, and, finally, you feel so bad you could swear someone wanted to poison you.

In Israel we have two national vegetables which we inherited from the Arabs. One is a kind of cucumber that can turn a Jewish stomach. The other resembles a piece of mahogany furniture, but it seems to be constituted completely of cork. This is eggplant. I have no enthusiasm for either, but here we can make of them whatever our heart desires. From each vegetable separately, an Arab bride can make about sixty different dishes.

These vegetables remind me of that famous soup with nails. You remember how to make a soup with nails. You boil a few potatoes, add a marrow bone, some barley, a carrot, parsley. After it has simmered a while, you stir in some goose fat. Then, when the soup has a heavenly taste, you put in a nail and take it out again. That's how you make a soup with nails. The same holds for our two national vegetables. If you have what to put in the kettle, the vegetables won't spoil the soup. But the trouble is that they are used instead of what you want. Suppose you would like a goulash; you'll get a goulash of eggplant. If you want a steak, fine, they slice off a piece of eggplant and put it on the frying pan in some vegetable oil, and you have steak. If you would like some goose livers fried in onions, they slice the cucumber which turns a Jewish stomach, mix it with some onions, and fry in a hot pan in sesame oil. If you're going to take this for goose livers with onions, you have to have a good memory to recall how they tasted thirty years ago, in the old country.

All of these presumptions about the two vegetables are possible only if you have a wife whom you love, because if you love her, you don't mind what she serves. But what happens in the camps for the new immigrants? How can the food there be cooked to please both the immigrants from Poland and those from Yemen or Morocco?

To solve this problem, they decided to prepare the food in two separate ways. The

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same foodstuffs are put into each vessel, but in one there are no spices and in the other all varieties: red pepper, cinnamon, ginger, cardamon, bay leaves, cloves, and all sorts of herbs and roots which grow at the ends of the earth. Everything is fine until you taste it. When the Polish Jew tastes the cooking, he says it's Turkish. The Turk says it's Ethiopian. The Ethiopian will swear it's Chinese, and a Chinese would be completely at a loss to know how one can eat the stuff.

If white cheese is served, the Polish Jews are happy and the Yemenites spit and swear. If olives are served, the Yemenites are happy and the Polish Jews spit and swear. Well, a hungry man is an angry man and tries to find some place to put the blame. If you don't like the food, you go around discontented with the whole world; nothing suits you and you can't enjoy the Jewish state.

But God in heaven watches over man and provides the cure for the disease. The Orthodox Jews stood firm as Gibraltar against cooking in the camps on the Sabbath. It's so good to be a Jew, they said, it's worth sacrificing a cooked meal once a week. (In our climate, how can we cook a day before for tens of thousands of people?) Then someone had an idea. In the *galut,* for the Sabbath, we used to make *tcholent* (the dish of meat, *kishke,* potatoes, barley, and beans all mixed together that was put into the oven on Friday afternoon and eaten Saturday afternoon), so why not here and see how the *galut* technique operates in Israel? It turned out the *galut* did have something to offer, because as soon as the *tcholent* was served its tremendously wonderful aroma intoxicated everyone. The Polish Jew claimed the *tcholent* as his achievement. The Yemenite, his ten fingers scraping the plate and his eyes fixed on heaven, said now really and truly he realized the Messiah had come, for to be in Israel, in one's own country, and to eat a dish like *tcholent*—that is the coming of the millennium. After eating the *tcholent,* the Turkish Jew applauded with joy. The Moroccan emitted strange sounds of satisfaction as if he had just eaten marzipan. The Beni Israel, a peppery Jew, merely added a half cup of pepper and tasted the flavors of ambrosia in his *tcholent.*

So it came about that at the Jerusalem conference to consider how to teach the Israelis how to eat, the *tcholent* was lauded as a rare discovery, and it was hoped that through this rare discovery of our grandmothers in the *galut,* a single taste in food might be wrought among the twenty tribes of Israel. In a word, the *tcholent* will unite the twenty tribes into one nation.

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FROM THE AMERICAN SCENE

PAPA, MAMA, AND GRANDFATHER FLORANCE

From a Family Album of the 1870's

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER

"YOU get a Democrat in the White House," Papa used to say gloomily, "and you'll see." The very vagueness of what was foredoomed seemed to add to the dire quality of the catastrophe. Less than two months before his death, he struggled out of bed and insisted on being driven to the polls to cast his vote for Benjamin Harrison as President. Even if the effort cost him his life, he wasn't going to risk going before his Maker without having done his best to stave off ruin to his beloved country. I had the pleasure, some years later, of telling Mr. Harrison of this sacrifice on the part of my father; he seemed much touched.

Papa had a beautiful voice, one of those rare, true baritones, sympathetic, deep, but never approaching a bass rumble. Often, as a little child, I used to lie in my bed unable to sleep, listening to Papa entertaining guests in the parlor. Somehow it always made me sad, for a man's singing always evoked for me the lame beggars who used to go about the streets singing and collecting pennies from bystanders. I can remember distinctly how puzzled I was. When at last I sank into sleep, my mind was a confused jumble of Papa limping about with crutches, although not in the street but in the parlor, collecting pennies from well-dressed guests.

Papa delighted in surprising people with his voice. He related with great glee how skeptical sopranos used to be when he asked them to sing duets with him. And when he finally persuaded them, much against their will, to make the attempt, how delighted they were. I remember he had sung with Carlotta Patti, sister of the divine Adelina, and had thought her voice even more beautiful than her better-known sister's. Carlotta was lame, so she did not have a professional career. I think she used to sing now and then for charity.

Papa was a great whist player. He was always one of the team that upheld the whistly honor of the Union Club, going from city to city when important out-of-town matches were on. His usual partner was a man named Henry Clay, although we were told he was no relation to the great Southerner. Papa had outspoken contempt for the way women played the game; he refused to honor it with the name of "whist" but called it "cranberries." But he made an exception of me and used to say that I had a head for the game—possibly his affection for his baby warped his judgment. He wanted me to study the game seriously, but cards never appealed to me.

Mama's father was also a great whist

ANNIE NATHAN MEYER, now eighty-four years old, has had a varied and active career as dramatist, novelist, and worker in public causes. As a pioneer in the cause of higher education for women, her greatest achievement was the founding of Barnard College; it was she who in 1888 succeeded in obtaining the sanction of the Columbia University trustees for the opening of a women's school, and she has served on Barnard's board of trustees since its inception. Mrs. Meyer is the author of a number of plays, including *The Advertising of Kate* (1921) and *Black Souls* (1932); the most recently published of her non-dramatic books was *Barnard Beginnings* (1935). These memoirs of Mrs. Meyer's childhood are drawn from an autobiographical volume as yet unpublished.

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player, although we children were brought up to believe he could not approach Papa in his knowledge of the game. He was a small, dark, nervous man with a fringe of white hair encircling his shiny, pink bald pate. He was constantly clearing his throat in a loud and, to us children, quite fascinating manner. He wore strong spectacles on his thin, aristocratic nose and always claimed that he possessed very poor sight. Papa, however, maliciously insisted that he had mighty sharp vision for a trump or a revoke on the part of an opponent, but could never see the outstretched hand of a beggar. But then Papa, as I have intimated, either liked or disliked heartily; there were no half measures with him. In the end, all of Papa's children were cut off in Grandfather Florance's will. His considerable fortune went to those who had sympathized with the South in the Civil War. So I suppose I can say that we four suffered for our country's sake.

Since I was very dark, Grandfather Florance used to amuse himself by threatening to take me down South and sell me as a slave. (Slavery was over, but that didn't spoil the joke for him. In fact he loved to speak, as did so many Southerners, as if Appomattox had never been.) "It's lucky for you, child," he used to say, "that you're not living in the South. You'd find yourself sold down the river in no time!" The grownups had rare fun watching the tears come to my eyes.

Mama did not always approve of Papa's jokes. I don't mean to imply for a moment that she had no sense of humor. I can still hear the little sniff with which she showed her appreciation if any of her brood of youngsters said anything quaint or amusing. But she didn't always agree with Papa about what was really funny. She was especially annoyed at one of his capers involving me. Papa would proudly announce that, young as I was—somewhere around four, I think—I could spell my name. So, as yet unacquainted with the alphabet, I would glibly rattle off: "M-o-n-k-e-y—Annie!" It never failed to be greeted with laughter. And I never failed to be disgusted. I couldn't see anything funny in being able to spell my name before most children could. Surely it was a feat to be applauded, not laughed at. But there was no predicting the behavior of grownups. No understanding them. For many years the name "Monkey" clung to me, although of course I hadn't the slightest idea why.

PAPA, on the other hand, considered himself something of an artist as a joker and often went to great lengths to sustain this image of himself. At a time when everyone was anxious over a pestilence that was sweeping the city, he would seat himself in a Fifth Avenue bus, having arranged that his nephew and fellow conspirator Mortimer Hendricks was standing at the next corner ready to enter the same vehicle. On Mort's entrance into the bus, Papa would assume an expression of great concern and anxiously inquire how he had left his friend. Cousin Mort would shake his head lugubriously and express the fear that his imaginary friend was doomed. Usually there was no need to say more. One by one the occupants of the bus would slip away as inconspicuously as possible, or if with one or two less nervous ones the joke failed to "take," the two pranksters would continue the conversation realistically until the bus was theirs and they would roll on the empty seats (two long benches, one on either side, not the cross seats of today) roaring with laughter at their success.

Mama particularly minded Papa's pranks when they interfered with the peace of the household, and Papa was constantly promising, and just as constantly forgetting, not to test out the sense of humor of our domestic servants. He would instruct the waitress, for example, to go on filling his glass with ice water until he said "when." He would hold out his glass slightly away from the table so the waitress would not wet the tablecloth, and she would start to pour. "That will do," said he; and nine times out of ten she would stop. His indignation would be immense: "I told you to go on filling the glass," he would say, "until I said 'when.' Did you hear me say 'when'?" He would look very fierce and often it ended with the maid bursting into tears and leaving the room, if not the house. Mama would run after her and explain that "Mr. Nathan" had a dreadful way of fooling with the maids, although he had promised again and again he would stop. Papa would be a bit ashamed of himself and for a while our meals would proceed in peace.

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But once he met his match. She was a new girl, but she seemed less flustered than most of them. I wouldn't swear that Mama hadn't put her wise, but anyway when Papa said, "That will do," she continued blandly to fill his glass. Surprised, Papa said, "That's enough, thank you," but she appeared oblivious. When the water began to drip onto the rug, he was forced to swallow his pride and say: "When," whereupon she stopped pouring and we all laughed. Papa, I regret to say, sulked. Like most jokers, he laughed at all who couldn't take a joke, but if anyone paid him in his own coin, it was no laughing matter.

Another habitual joke of his that annoyed Mama extremely was his asking, at the dinner table, "Who wants some of this dead fish?" On being reproved, he would answer mildly, looking up at us with his babyish blue eyes with the most innocent expression, "Why, it *is* dead, isn't it? You wouldn't want to eat a fish alive, would you?"

He was in the habit of reading the *Police Gazette*, and it was his custom to stop at a news stand and ask with a grave and serious air, "What religious papers have you?" The news dealer would list the *Christian Union* and whatever others he carried; and then Papa would pick up his copy of the *Police Gazette* and say with complete seriousness, "Well, I guess I'll take this one," leaving the news dealer to grin with delight.

I never read Ibsen's play, *An Enemy of the People*, without thinking of the scrape Papa got into at Richfield Springs, where he and I went one summer in search of a cure for his sciatica. As soon as he was well enough to think of anything but his illness, he was like a schoolboy at his pranks again. Papa insisted that there wasn't enough water in the sulphur springs to bathe every patient and have enough left for them to drink, and a friend of his spread the story that the water for the baths was led back to the source whence the drinking water came, and what they were all drinking every morning so conscientiously (many holding their noses so they could get the unpalatable stuff down) was what had been drained from the baths. The two grown-up boys even went to the trouble of drawing maps and plans showing how the bath water drained into the springs. When word of all this reached the authorities, I believe a suit was threatened. In any case, Papa and I left, more or less under a cloud. The doctors were frightfully indignant, but not more so than Papa himself, who always had the greatest contempt for those who couldn't "take a joke."

Considering that we were a large family —we Nathans together with the various offshoots: the Hendrickses and the Seixases and the Florances—it was astonishing that we possessed no photographs of our ancestors or even of our contemporary relatives. The explanation was: Papa. A few daguerreotypes, not being of cardboard, escaped his predatory scissors. But all photographs and all colored prints—some of the rarest of the Currier and Ives prints among them—Papa looked upon as his legitimate prey. He would take all sorts of pictures and give them a highly personal flavor by pasting upon them the contents of our family album. There rises before me a picture of three pedestrians much in the public eye at the time. It was supposed to be a scene taken from the famous Walking Match held at the old Madison Square Garden. Miraculously the match was transformed to one between Papa, Cousin Mort, and Cousin Monte, a handsome bachelor cousin who boasted of great popularity in New York society and always served as the fortune-teller in the fashionable "Kermesse" of the day. And also, miraculously, the onlookers crowding the bleachers consisted of cousins, uncles, and aunts, as many as Papa could lay his hands on; one ardent rooter was dignified old Rabbi Lyons, who had married Papa's oldest sister. (There was such a difference in their ages that Papa, concealed behind a sofa, heard him make his proposal; a giggle betrayed him and he was yanked out and punished.) It was all very amusing, certainly, but Mama was left to mourn the contents of her albums.

THE Florances, my mother's people, were an old Southern family that came from Portugal to Charleston, South Carolina, early in the 18th century, and later went to New Orleans, where my mother was born in 1842. She grew up surrounded by slaves, and knew nothing of the household arts. In her young ladyhood, the family moved to Philadelphia. She used to enjoy telling how, when she set up housekeeping in New York,

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in West Fifteenth Street near Fifth Avenue, shortly after her marriage in 1859, her maid had inquired how she wished the potatoes cooked for dinner. In a panic, she hastily answered, "Oh, do them any way you are accustomed to," and then rushed around the corner to purchase a cookbook.

My mother's mother must have been a remarkable woman. She was a daughter of that sturdy old patriot, Gershom Mendez Seixas, who suffered his synagogue to be closed rather than have his congregation pray for George the Third. He was one of the few Whigs, perhaps the only one, among the trustees of Kings College, which was later to become Columbia. He lived to have the satisfaction of assisting in the inauguration of the first President of the United States. As Mrs. William Florance, of Philadelphia, his daughter, my grandmother, played an important part in the life of the city. Her portrait, taken from a daguerreotype in my possession, is admirably reproduced in *The History of Rittenhouse Square* written by a scholarly Philadelphian.

She was a good deal of a Puritan, and the story was often told in our home of how some guest had come to one of her dinners dressed with less modesty than she would have at her table. My grandmother rose from her seat, ascended to her room, and returned carrying a light shawl which she put about the guest's shoulders, remarking gently as she did so, "I am afraid, my dear, you must be chilly." So far as I know, the frivolous lady succumbed without protest. There is something in the deep-set eyes looking out at you from the daguerreotype that lends credence to the tale.

Mama, without being a professional author, basked in the paler glory of possessing literary talent. In those days, it was not considered quite polite to speak of a woman as a writer. One referred genteelly and somewhat deprecatingly to her having or indulging in a *cacoëthes scribendi*. Mama had had some verses published in the Philadelphia papers. It gave her a certain distinction without, however, rendering her obnoxious to the average unliterary person. She was sparkling, witty, a delightful conversationalist, but she never could be classified by any stretch of the imagination as that horror, a learned woman.

In those days, amateur theatricals claimed much more of the time of New York society women than they do now. Where today various good causes are served by dances or dinners, or by buying out some evening of a successful professional performance, in those days the same function was performed by amateur theatricals. I remember distinctly how Mama boasted of the many institutions which her club, the Amaranthine of Brooklyn, had assisted. There was the starting of some Boys' Lodging House she was especially proud of. I have no idea why my mother was the leading lady of a Brooklyn society, for we never lived in Brooklyn. Perhaps it was the best.

MAMA knew a great many women of the stage and they were constantly coming to the house. The one with whom Mama was most intimate was Clara Morris. I wonder if anyone remembers her now? She was the American Sarah Bernhardt, clearly America's greatest emotional actress and, like Bernhardt, she derived much of her fascination from a certain air of mystery that clung to her. She was very thin, as was the divine Sarah, and her voice was also exquisitely melodious. Her face was ravaged by her great eyes. How perfectly I remember her sitting informally at the luncheon table where we children were also taking our meal. One of us, I am not certain that it was I, leaned forward and, quite unabashed by the lady's presence, asked Mama how it came that she could be a dear friend of one whose teeth were so black. I can see Mama's horrified expression. But Miss Morris, I remember, smiled a sad smile and murmured something to us about the iron she was obliged to take.

After her departure, Mama told us how frightfully, inexcusably rude we had been. She impressed upon us with great clearness and firmness that personal remarks must never be made before others. Especially not before the very one concerned. She explained that poor Miss Morris was a great sufferer from some mysterious disease which necessitated taking medicines that blackened the teeth, and she took pains to assure us that Miss Morris's teeth were not black from any lack of care: Mama had brought us up with the understanding that one of our most important duties was the care of our teeth. Her slogan, which was particularly

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applicable to women, was that no one could be pretty who had poor teeth and no one who had nice, white teeth could be wholly unattractive.

MAMA was very beautiful. She had one of the rare, truly Grecian noses. Her features were indeed so regular that her vivid animation could not be caught in a photograph. She looked cold. I have often noticed that people with irregular features usually take more flattering likenesses. In fact I have never seen a photograph that does justice to a really beautiful woman and I have often seen photographs that flatter ugly women.

I lavished affection upon Mama and tried in awkward and often foolish ways to express it. I can still hear my whimper and Mama's scream as she realized she had rocked on my toes. "But how could you do such a thing!" exclaimed Mama. "What on earth were you doing with your foot right under the rocker?"

Shamefaced I replied, "I was trying to pet your foot."

Mama's tears joined mine as she pulled me to her lap.

Mama and Papa were second cousins, Mama's grandfather, Rabbi Gershom Seixas, having been a brother of Papa's grandmother. I own a miniature of Rabbi Seixas in his clerical robes. It is mounted as a brooch and was worn by my mother when her daguerreotype was taken during her wedding trip. A fine, ascetic, scholarly face.

Of course I knew little or nothing about Papa's courting of my mother. To a child, it is inconceivable that his parents ever had any existence apart from each other. I suppose, without working it out at all, one assumes that one's parents were born married. But there is one tiny envelope in my possession addressed in my mother's fine delicate penmanship to Robert Nathan. There is no other address on it, so undoubtedly it was brought to New York by one of Papa's sisters who often visited their Philadelphia cousins. The little envelope is pink and in one corner my mother had written: "Mark how the envelope blushes for its contents!"

How I would love to know the contents! Theirs was a generation that had not yet learned to seek protection for its sensibilities by covering them with a shell of assumed indifference. But the little envelope is empty.

I have also in my possession the handwritten invitation to my mother's wedding, January 5, 1859. It took place in the roomy, dignified old home in Philadelphia to which Mama had come as a small child from New Orleans, the city of her birth.

THE fact that I had a great many relatives was always getting me into trouble. Innumerable aunts, vague white-haired figures, always dressed in black, visited us frequently —and usually unexpectedly. I was forever being rushed into clean stiff dresses and brought down with clean face, carefully examined ears, and freshly curled hair to be looked over coldly with appraising eyes (all of them alike in this—though, alas, not alike in the name with which each must be dutifully addressed). Then there would come from the thin pursed lips the eternal question: "Now whom does she look like?"

Once, at least, my patience ran out. I can hear myself saying, "I look like my mother around the elbows and like my father around the knees." Shocked faces. I am dragged off supperless to bed.

The most impressive of the lot was Aunt Rachel, short, enormous, wearing her superb white hair in a huge pompadour. She moved regally, spoke graciously, and was always tightly corseted, though I must confess without much tangible result. She lived in a great brownstone mansion on Fifth Avenue at the corner of Thirty-seventh Street—a house that many years later was to be the first Fifth Avenue home of the rising caterer who was fast becoming the rage, the elegant and tactful Louis Sherry.

We were always on our best behavior when we were taken to visit Aunt Rachel. The chairs in the parlor were of tufted light blue satin. I was fascinated by the matching button at the heart of each dent. A marble statue stood at each end of the huge high-ceilinged room—the *ne plus ultra* of fashion and elegance. One of these fascinating groups, I remember well, represented the trial of Abraham. Our withers were wrung in sympathetic agony, as we saw it all there before us, almost life-size. The bearded patriarch's head raised to heaven in agonized prayer, the poor little obedient boy (who, it was duly impressed upon us, never had

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questioned his father's right to slay him) lying so still and so meek with the knife at his throat and—yes, oh, look, look—the ram which God had provided as a substitute at the last split second, there lying in the bushes! Nor must I forget the altar with the marble flames playing beneath it and faggots bound on the top, where soon the ram was to be placed. Never could we tire of looking at this work of art. I remember also some paintings on the walls, which rendered it all very grand indeed. One was a large oil painting by Bouguereau, but I am not quite sure of its subject. I think it was "The Swing" or "The Spring." I know there were two figures in it, a youth and a maiden.

AMONG my aunts, there was one who lived in Philadelphia, and we saw her only on very special occasions, such as a funeral. It was as fixed as the laws of the Medes and the Persians that the family show up at funerals. Even if one had not spoken for years to the deceased, it was done as a matter of "respect for the dead." A funeral in the family was therefore quite an exciting event, bringing us in contact with numerous cousins and even now and then an aunt or an uncle whom we had never before laid eyes on. You see, with such a large clan, someone was always being offended—someone did not call often enough, or someone neglected to ask after the health of someone's father or mother, or sister or brother—and then whole groups would cease to be on speaking terms. Mama had committed some crime of omission when meeting one of the Lazarus family. Aunt Hettie had resented it, and so Mama and she no longer spoke to each other; and Papa felt bound to take up the quarrel and refuse to speak to his sister, so as not to seem to reflect upon the behavior of his wife.

Thus it was that I used to see my cousin Emma, the poetess, only infrequently and at some relative's house, never at ours. Besides Emma, whom I would have liked to know better, there was her almost equally brilliant sister Josephine who wrote prose with delightful wit and clarity, and the fascinating oldest sister Sarah whom I later came to adore. Although, when I knew her well, Sarah was an old woman and almost shapeless, having put on weight with her years, nevertheless she still possessed great charm. Her dark eyes were magnificent, her hair remained jet black long after most women had resigned themselves to white hair, her complexion was exquisite, her smile wondrously tender and understanding, and her voice pure melody.

About Sarah there lingered also the fragrance of a beautiful and tender love story. There was a man well known in Newport society who worshipped her but who was married to a woman who was either a hopeless invalid or insane. I never knew the details, but I remember there was always about it all the aroma of the same sort of tragic romance that had prevented George Eliot from marrying George Henry Lewes.

One aunt had a daughter who was tall, splendidly proportioned, a queenly beauty. I never understood why we saw so little of her and a good deal of her two less attractive sisters, but now and then I overheard mysterious allusions to this Beauty, and whispered remarks among the servants about my aunt's strange blindness in continuing to open her doors to her—and sometimes a sly remark made by an older cousin.

"She seems utterly blind to everything," one would say.

"Well, what do you expect?—that a mother would cast off her daughter?"

I used to wonder and wonder what my beautiful cousin could have done to make all her relatives lower their voices when they mentioned her. Years later, I learned that she had been the mistress of a married society leader; and the last time I heard of her, she had married an unemployed waiter and the two were living miserably in one dingy room.

THERE was one aunt—Aunt Rosalie—who was really a cousin, the daughter of Uncle Ben, but she had married one of Mama's brothers. There was much bated breath in discussing him, too. There had been not only a woman who had separated him from his wife, but a daughter, an actual flesh-and-blood daughter by this woman—at least everyone insisted so and refused to believe his story that he had merely been sorry for her and had helped an unfortunate widow with a daughter. Later on the woman died and what was more natural than that the girl should come to live with her father? But, horror of horrors, soon rumors began

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and at last were verified. *He was about to marry his own daughter.* Such behavior was scarcely to be believed. In fact, it was so utterly inconceivable that opinion swung around in his favor. If the young woman whom he married was not his daughter, then perhaps what he had said about merely being a good friend, and merely being sorry for her mother, had been true all along. Before he died, after years of the cruelest kind of ostracism, he was actually once more established in grace, at least in time to die with the blessings of his relatives upon him.

This Uncle Theodore lived in Philadelphia, so we never saw much of him as children. But when we did, we liked him. There was an air of sadness about him, and yet there was plenty of fun and life in him to be brought out if the atmosphere was favorable. We children, who were supposed to know nothing about the scandal, found ourselves wondering about the true story even as we jumped up and down on his knee.

If there was anything that could reconcile me to a divorce in every six marriages, it would be the thought of those poor "grass widows" of other days—women like my Aunt Rosalie, deserted by their husbands, neither wives, widows, nor spinsters. Society proclaimed that their lives were ruined and so they must remain; they were accordingly expected to dress in black, go out little, have no men friends, and not smile too much. The husband could go to the devil in his own way, but it behooved the wife to walk the straight and narrow path.

Aunt Rosalie, however, was independent in a manner that in her day was utterly original—and, let me hasten to add, utterly indefensible. At the time when I can remember, her three children were practically grown up and she actually had the temerity to enjoy her freedom and, what was completely unforgivable, to show the world that she did. I remember well the buzzing that arose when she decided to travel all over Europe with a man. He was an oculist; Aunt Rosalie wore the thickest glasses I have ever seen, and doubtless her friendship with the oculist began on a strictly professional level. She insisted that he was merely a good friend—borrowing, perhaps, from her faithless husband's example?—and declared that traveling with him saved her no end of trouble and being "put upon." I think it more than likely that, in fact, no romance of any kind entered into the perfectly practical, common-sense arrangement. But rumor and gossip are not concerned with common sense. I myself, I remember, was highly indignant at Aunt Rosalie's "flying in the face of decency," as it was called. Childhood knows no compromises.

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CEDARS OF LEBANON

FROM THE APOCALYPTIC EZRA

A Verse Translation

CHARLES REZNIKOFF

THIS is a rearrangement and versification of parts of the Fourth Book of Ezra—so designated in the appendix to the Vulgate—or 2 Esdras of the Protestant Apocrypha. I have based this rearrangement and versification upon a translation of the apocalyptic Ezra from the Syriac by Dr. Joshua Bloch, chief of the Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, a translation he is preparing for his edition of Ezra in the series of Jewish Apocrypha sponsored by The Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning; and I have done so with Dr. Bloch's very kind permission and that of the sponsors. I have also used the "Common" version and a translation from the Arabic by Simon Ockley, as published by William Whiston in 1711, referred to by G. H. Box in R. H. Charles's edition of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

The Apocalyptic part of this Ezra, to be distinguished from the Ezra of the Old Testament, was written by several persons during the miseries and persecutions of the struggle against Rome in the 1st century of the Christian Era. It is Dr. Box's opinion that the book as we have it—without the Christian additions—was edited and first published about 120 CE, and the chief part written by one man about 100 CE. Neither a Hebrew, Aramaic, nor Greek original or version exists. At one time, some scholars believed that the original was in Greek. Dr. Box argues that it was in Hebrew. Dr. Bloch, however, does not believe that there ever was a Greek or Hebrew original or version, but only an Aramaic original.—CHARLES REZNIKOFF

BECAUSE I saw the desolation of Zion
and the wealth of the dwellings of Babylon,
I said to myself:
Have the inhabitants of Babylon behaved so well?

And the angel, Uriel, came to cry: "Is your heart troubled
because of this world, Ezra,
and would you understand the Most High?
Then weigh for me the weight of fire,
measure the blast of the wind,
or call back a day that is past."
And I answered: "My lord, what man can do these things?"

And the angel cried: "If I asked you how many springs in the sea?
what are the paths of Heaven? or the gates of Hell?
you would say, I have never gone down into the depths of the sea
or to the gates of Hell,
nor have I ever climbed up into the sky.
But I asked you about fire and wind and the day—
which you know well—

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and yet you could not answer;
how then are you to understand the way of the Most High?"

And I answered: "It would have been better for me
not to have been born
than to live and suffer without knowing why;
else, why have I been given a mind?
Why has Israel been abandoned to the heathen,
and the people God loved to godless tribes?
If the world was designed
for the righteous,
why do they not have it,
and are ruled by a people that are like spittle?
Why?"

The angel, his face as bright as lightning, cried:
"Do you think that you love Israel more than his Maker does?
The days come when the evil men do
will be greater than whatever you see
and whatever you heard as of long ago;
and those of one city will ask in the neighboring cities:
Has any good man passed through?
and in the neighboring cities they will answer: No.
Chasms will open in many places
and out of them fire will not cease to blaze;
and even the birds will leave the land.
The sweet waters will turn salt,
and friend will suddenly turn upon friend;
women will be in labor and unable to give birth.
Just as a farmer sows many seeds and plants much
but the seeds do not all take root nor do all the seeds sprout;
so of those who have come upon the earth:
out of a cluster a grape shall be saved,
and out of a great forest a fern.
Mourn not for the multitudes that perish;
for they are like a breath and like smoke and like a flame that burns
until it goes out."

And I, Ezra, prayed: "God at Whose word
the hosts of Heaven change into winds and fire—
and it was so when all was dark and silent
before the sun and moon were shining
and the voice of man was heard—
what is man that You are angry at him?

"Though seed and ship and food are lost
earth and sea and dish remain;
but the story of Israel is not so:
we who received the Law perish,
and Your Law remains—in all its glory.

"If the farmer's seed does not receive God's rain
will it live?
Forgive the sins of Your people and remember those who served You:
do not regard the foolishness of the ungodly,

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but rather those who in spite of tortures kept Your covenant;
do not think of those who have done evil,
but rather of those who acknowledged their awe of You;
and do not will to destroy those who were like cattle,
but look at those who stood in the splendor of Your Law;
and be not angry at those who behaved like beasts,
but love those who have always had faith in Your righteousness.
Give us
the flowering of a new heart and the fruit of it—
light a candle of understanding
in our hearts, Lord—
that every one who is corruptible and whoever is made in the
image of man
may live."

CHARLES REZNIKOFF is already familiar to readers of COMMENTARY as a poet through his translation and arrangement of selections from Judah Halevi which appeared in this department in December 1948, and through a group of poems of his own, "Meditations on the Fall and Winter Holidays," in the issue of November 1949. He has, besides, contributed several articles on American Jewish history to the pages of COMMENTARY. Mr. Reznikoff has had published a number of volumes of poetry, among them *Jerusalem the Golden,* and several novels, including *By the Waters of Manhattan.*

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ON THE HORIZON

ELMER RICE: THE TRIUMPH OF "MR. ZERO"

Turnabout of an American Dramatist

HENRY POPKIN

ELMER RICE'S work, as represented in a new volume of selected plays, repeats the familiar pattern of most successful American dramatists of our day: the painstaking mastery of conventional technique, a brief period of originality, and then a slow hardening into run-of-the-mill attitudes expressed in run-of-the-mill forms —varied at the proper times with a social-conscious period and a patriotic period. What lends special interest to this pattern as it has appeared in Elmer Rice's career is the exceptional brightness of the hope he inspired but never fulfilled.

With his early play, *The Adding Machine,* Rice established himself as the interpreter of the "average man"; with each succeeding play he became more surely identified as the one American playwright who had most deliberately committed himself to presenting what is typical in American life. (Not even George Kelly has been as explicit as Rice in calling attention to the representativeness of his subjects.) By contrasting his humdrum bourgeois types with a few "different" individuals—foreigners, artists, radicals, and Jews —Rice guaranteed that his emphasis upon the average would not be lost. But even as he furnished more and more details about these alternatives to the dull average, he grew increasingly fond of the average itself, and, finally, in his latest plays, he has ardently glorified the typical, which has now become the *normal,* to be defended against the abnormality of imagination and intellect.

In *The Adding Machine* Rice reduced the average to its purest form, Mr. Zero. Taking full advantage of both the freedom and the restriction of expressionism, he exhibited Mr. Zero in all the nakedness of his simple mind, his fear of freedom, his resentment of those unlike himself. Mr. Zero never manages to be anything but an efficient machine, whether he is at the office adding columns of figures or at home parroting the small talk of his social class. The dramatist's job was peculiar here, in that he did not attempt to make this automaton into a fully realized individual; on the contrary, the perfection of Mr. Zero's characterization rests in his never being more than a type. But surrounding the central portrait of Mr. Zero are the dim shadows of gayer attitudes toward life, never clearly shown but only suggested: the buoyant dreams of his co-worker, Daisy Devore; the free ways of the girl whom he has had arrested for indecent exposure; the satiric tradition of the two clergymen whom the play makes residents of the Elysian fields, Swift and Rabelais; and—dimmest of all, but most significant for Rice's later work—the vague figures of the exotic strangers whom Mr. Zero resents and whom he recognizes only when he gives expression to his bitter hatred of Jews and Negroes. In two other early plays which Rice wrote with collaborators

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THE publication of a selection of Elmer Rice's plays (*Seven Plays,* Viking Press, $5.00, 524 pp.), concurrent with the brief run on Broadway of his *Not for Children,* here provides HENRY POPKIN with a vantage point from which to analyze the course of Mr. Rice's thought and dramatic work. Mr. Popkin was born in 1924 in Providence, Rhode Island, and studied at Brown University, the University of Michigan, and Harvard. He has published articles on drama in *Kenyon Review* and *Theatre Arts.*

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(Hatcher Hughes and Dorothy Parker), these forces of revolt and criticism are personified by a poet and a former actress; and in *Black Sheep,* a play Rice copyrighted the year *The Adding Machine* was produced, a novelist of bohemian inclinations speaks for them.

The design should be clear from these examples alone: the artist, the skeptic, the rebel, and the foreigner are here being favorably contrasted with the mindless American bourgeois. During the early 20's, when these plays were written, this conflict was becoming a major concern with many of our novelists; in particular, Ludwig Lewisohn, Ben Hecht, and Robert Nathan were using Jewish characters to dramatize colorful alternatives to "Babbittry." For Rice, the dichotomy between Babbittry and Bohemia provided his most fruitful subject—and his favorite character type, for in most of his subsequent plays he has been trying to improve on his portrait of Mr. Zero. And yet, all his later studies of the typical American nonentity reveal only that he was right the first time in *The Adding Machine,* that this type is best seen in isolation, and that trying to portray him in the plural rather than the singular only multiplies Zero; in art, as in arithmetic, multiplying Zero produces only zero.

We find many Zeros in *Street Scene,* since this is the first play in which Rice created a cross section of American life. Mr. and Mrs. Zero may here be disguised by Italian, German, Swedish, and Irish accents, but these characters are obviously not intended to be exotically different foreigners; they have been Americanized, in the worst sense of the term. Consequently, although Lippo Fiorentino may praise the beauties of his native Sorrento, he must also justify his coming to America, where "ees plenty money." These Zeros, like their prototypes in *The Adding Machine,* are anti-Semites, but they are more fortunate in having the victims of their prejudice close at hand. On the other hand, the Kaplans are the exotic foreigners *par excellence,* the perfect foils for the assorted Babbitts of the cast; they are the very incarnation of radicalism, culture, irreligion, and everything else the Zeros find abhorrent and dangerous. It is in the case of these "good" people in particular that Rice often seems to be offering labels (Whitman, Beethoven, Karl Marx) instead of characterization, but the rest of *Street Scene* is quite successful both as melodrama and as critique of Zeroism.

Counsellor-at-Law, the next major play, again employs the Jew as a symbol of individuality and intelligence. The banality of Zeroism is here represented not by the flotsam of the lower middle class but by the would-be aristocrats of the Social Register. We observe the offensive behavior of a Jewish lawyer's Gentile wife, her incredibly nasty little children, and her effete boy friend, who are put side by side with the warm-hearted, warm-blooded friends of the lawyer's youth. This latter group contains a cross section resembling that of *Street Scene,* but in *Counsellor-at-Law* the Irish and Italians are "good" and interesting, not "bad" and dull as in *Street Scene.* By this time the distinctiveness of the foreigner has evidently come to be regarded as a good thing almost for its own sake; the only profound difference between the two social classes here depicted seems to be between foreign stock and native stock. No one on either side has any pronounced cultural or political leanings; the lawyer avoids the extremes of conservative and radical politics by doing business with Tammany Hall. Perhaps the real distinction is that George Simon's dishonesty is *generally* better justified than his wife's—but if Simon is intended to embody the good attributes that Mr. Zero resents and the Kaplans cherish, it is a little disappointing to report that the only commendable qualities left to him seem to be his loyalty to old friends and his enthusiasm for his work.

JUDGMENT DAY stands apart from the rest of the *Seven Plays,* since it is the only one with a European locale. It fits the pattern of the dramatic representation of Zeroism, for, in fascism, it shows the attitudes and loyalties of Zeroism made law. This is a development for which we were prepared by Lippo's admiration for Mussolini in *Street Scene.* What seems particularly significant in this connection is the way the little men, the Zeros of this far-off Slavic land, fall into line. But in *Judgment Day* the issues are made too clear and perhaps a little too easy to judge by the device of creating (partially) imaginary circumstances in a (partially) imaginary country, argued out in a very disorderly courtroom. This technique recalls

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the similarly melodramatic disorderliness of Rice's first produced play, *On Trial.*

While *Judgment Day* revealed Rice's opposition to legalized conformity abroad, some other plays of the years preceding suggested a more genial attitude toward the homegrown American variety. In several of these plays the commonplace American is idealized at the expense of the unattached dissident. The Americans of *See Naples and Die* are victimized by a scheming Russian nobleman. In *The Subway* an innocent girl of a conventional family is ruined by an artist. In *The Left Bank* the wife of an expatriate decides that America is better than Paris. An American girl, in *Between Two Worlds,* is seduced by a Russian film director. The villains of two later plays, *American Landscape* and *Flight to the West,* are again foreigners; in both instances they are Nazis. The Americans of these last two plays display more unity than variety; a special point seems to be made of the ingrained Americanism of the young Jewish husband of *Flight to the West,* who claims descent from Haym Salomon. In all six of these plays immediately preceding and following *Judgment Day,* our sympathy is sought for the plain American, who no longer exhibits the uglier signs of Zeroism, and sympathy must be withheld from the foreigner, the artist, and the expatriate.

Two artists—a playwright and an actress—are the chief characters of *Two on an Island,* but they are as commonplace and wholesome, as unconcerned about their art, as if they had just stepped out of the Hardy family; they are as typical as their names—John Thompson and Mary Ward. In this cross-section play, the only "representative" individuals whom we are encouraged to dislike are the flighty rich girl (repeating a theme of *Counsellor-at-Law*), the radical (reversing a theme of *Street Scene*), and the cynical Jewish theatrical producer. *Two on an Island* seems intended as a happy vindication of "normality": it's fun to be just folks. *Dream Girl* is a firmer step in the same direction. The "dream girl" first thinks herself in love with a man described as having "a face and manner that are almost too sensitive," a publisher's reader who has had the good taste and the bad judgment to reject a best-selling novel strongly resembling *Forever Amber;* she discovers in the end that the man she has loved all the time is the rough, tough, "normal" reporter who hates reviewing books and wants to become a sports writer. With *Dream Girl* the development of Rice's values has come full circle. More explicitly than in any other play, Rice here enthrones the standards of Mr. Zero and at the same time rejects the "sensitive" artists who would prevent Mrs. Zero from reading *Forever Amber.*

I SUPPOSE it all proves that if one lives with Mr. Zero long enough, one gets used to him and even comes to the conclusion that he is not such a bad fellow after all. In explaining this change, we must observe that the obvious formulas do not apply to Rice. This man's head has not been turned by success. We need only recall that, following *Counsellor-at-Law,* his hit plays became very infrequent. Furthermore, Rice's disdain for his audience and his critics is well known; this season's production of *Not for Children* served to remind us that he is not an idle flatterer. Here, Rice's spokesman seems to be a psychology professor who complains of the childishness of the modern theater, but who knows that critics, audiences, and producers are perfectly happy with Broadway's general mediocrity.

The most convincing explanation of Rice's friendlier attitude toward Mr. Zero is very different. Surely the Depression, the New Deal, and the rise of dictatorship abroad furnish sufficient reason for this change, sufficient to make any interested, liberal author sympathize with the average man's distress (in *We the People*), compliment his political acumen (by implication at least, in *A New Life*), contrast him with his less wise or less fortunate brothers abroad (in *Flight to the West* and *American Landscape*), and finally, in an excess of love and fellow feeling, credit him with every virtue, including many which he does not possess. Whether or not Rice intends it to be so, this attitude belongs to the new religion of the common man. The Supreme Being of this new faith, the common man himself, is almost Mr. Zero, for he is man stripped of all his distinctive, distinguishing qualities. He is a vacuum which sentiment must fill with evanescent virtues. What he is never is the concrete individual whose self-assertiveness once caused tyrants to tremble and despotisms to fall—the concrete human being who is at once the beginning and the end of democracy and art.

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THE STUDY OF MAN

PREJUDICE IN THE CATASTROPHIC PERSPECTIVE

Liberalism, Conservatism, and Anti-Semitism

PAUL KECSKEMETI

THE logic of God, it may be said, is: to become actual, a thing must have been possible. While the logic of the devil is: to become possible, a thing must have been actual. To most people, the extermination of whole ethnic groups seemed inconceivable and impossible before it happened. Afterwards, it became a possibility to be reckoned with. From now on such a possibility hangs like a shadow over the world. It has become possible to ask: what if the same kind of people gained control elsewhere—perhaps here?

To most Americans, such a question, I think, will appear preposterous. If any American Jew is seriously concerned about such a possibility, they would say, this only shows that he is hysterical, irrationally fearful, unrealistic in his thinking. The United States is not Germany. Political reality here is solidly rooted in the Constitution rather than in a heritage of sanguinary militaristic myths. Some ethnic prejudice is quite prevalent, and one can find many individuals choking with vicious hate. But the trend goes against prejudice rather than towards more of it, and there is no real danger that it might subvert the whole legal order and brush aside all Constitutional restraints. The less said about such a danger the better. For cries of alarm, where the majority sees no reason for alarm, rebound against the crier. He makes himself obnoxious, his behavior seems libelous, and he lays himself open to the suspicion of crying menace and doom for ulterior motives.

But a contrary pattern of thinking also may claim to be "realistic." To be realistic in the mid-20th century, this view holds, means above all that one must not deny the possibility of tragic crises and catastrophic changes in the political sphere. This is an age of revolution, and no established order, however venerable and seemingly solid, is forever safe from being overthrown. Whatever has happened in one place may happen elsewhere. In many instances it is the sounders of alarm who turn out to be right in the end.

Here, then, we have two types of realism at odds with each other. Which shall we follow? For immediate action, I have no doubt that the first type of realism, the "conservative" one, is the better guide. No action is needed to prevent an imminent outbreak of fascism, and shrill cries of alarm on that score are decidedly harmful. Thus, in combating prejudice, we should focus on the harm it actually does rather than on what it might do if the basic institutional order were to collapse. But all this does not mean that we can afford to neglect study of possible institutional crises and their totalitarian implications. We do need a theory of crises

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THE five-volume series "Studies in Prejudice," published by Harper during the past year, won immediate recognition as a monumental contribution to our scientific knowledge of the subject. The entire series was reviewed by Nathan Glazer in this department (June 1950); here PAUL KECSKEMETI, in one of a series of discussion articles COMMENTARY plans to print on these volumes, gives his own views as to a much commented-upon finding presented in one of the five volumes, *The Authoritarian Personality:* namely, that there is an organic personality connection between anti-Semitic prejudice and "status quo" conservative views on the social and economic order. Mr. Kecskemeti is a philosopher and social psychologist who was engaged in the study of propaganda during the last war, and is now working on research for Rand, an independent research corporation in California.

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which will tell us under what circumstances a working democratic institutional order might break down; what forms of totalitarianism might then emerge; and what one can do to prevent such disasters. The second, "catastrophic" kind of realism, too, must have a place in our thinking.

IT MAY be said, I think, that the keynote sounding in most of the rich literature on prejudice in America is the "conservative" type of realism outlined above. That is, most of the American students of the problem envisage it as a defect within the existing order of things, rather than as a portent of the total overthrow of the democratic order.

In this respect, however, the monumental "Studies in Prejudice" series* occupies a rather exceptional place, for its approach is characterized, to a considerable extent, by what I call the "catastrophic" type of realism. To be sure, in some of the volumes, particularly in *Dynamics of Prejudice* and *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder,* the treatment of prejudice proceeds along the more familiar, conservative lines. But in *The Authoritarian Personality,* the huge key volume in the series, the problem is formulated as that of "potential fascism"; the volume is conceived not only as an empirical analysis of the psychological aberration of prejudice but also as a political tract for the times. I propose to examine, not the series as a whole, but only the political "crisis theory" underlying treatment of the problem of prejudice in this volume.

But first a few words about the other, psychological and empirical, dimensions of the entire undertaking. The series, sponsored by the American Jewish Committee, represents without doubt the most comprehensive and profound psychological analysis of anti-Semitism that exists. Every available tool of attitude observation and measurement has been brought into play: interview techniques and projective methods in *The Authoritarian Personality,* statistical analysis in it and in *Dynamics of Prejudice,* psychoanalytic data in *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder,* content analysis in *Prophets of Deceit.*

*T. W. Adorno, Else Frenkel-Brunswik, Daniel J. Levinson and R. Nevitt Sanford, *The Authoritarian Personality;* Bruno Bettelheim and Morris Janowitz, *Dynamics of Prejudice;* Nathan W. Ackerman and Marie Jahoda, *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder;* Leo Lowenthal and Norbert Guterman, *Prophets of Deceit;* Paul Massing, *Rehearsal for Destruction* (this book was not available to, and is not considered by, the writer); Harper, 1950.

The conclusions reached by many researchers, using different techniques and basic theories, show a remarkable convergence, in itself an indication of the validity of the findings.

The main lesson derived may perhaps be stated as follows: ethnic prejudice in general, and anti-Semitic prejudice in particular, is a symptom of deep, unresolved conflicts within the personality of the prejudiced subject. It is not a kind of hostility which might be explained "rationally" in terms of, say, economic competition or fear of deprivation as based upon experience. It is a hatred that is self-hatred as much as hatred of the other; the prejudiced subject seeks to annihilate the object which is in a way a hated and feared part of the subject himself. This is why prejudice is so stubborn; rational persuasion cannot silence the furies within one's own breast. Since this is so, not only Jews and other targets of prejudice should be disturbed about it, but also the prejudiced subjects themselves, and society as a whole.

Another important insight which receives considerable emphasis, especially in *The Authoritarian Personality,* is that the views people hold on various subjects are not combined at random but form "clusters," so that a person who on one topic has an opinion belonging to one of those clusters is likely to have opinions belonging to the same cluster concerning many other topics. One of the objectives the authors sought to achieve was the identification of the array of opinions making up the "cluster" to which racial prejudice belongs. The material presented, concerning statistical correlations between "prejudice" and other attitudes, is impressive. Yet, such statistical material alone does not justify very far-reaching and decisive conclusions. We must not forget that no response to a questionnaire shows a real-life attitude "in the raw"; hence, an aggregate of such responses can, at best, be taken as only a rough indication of what the "real" profile of attitudes might be like. The authors themselves were fully aware of this; it is the reason why they supplemented the questionnaire method by more intensive methods of probing and analysis. This combination of "macroscopic" statistical methods with "microscopic" methods of individual interviews and tests is one of the most distinctive features of the work.

The subject of the present article, however, is not the contribution the series has made to attitude analysis, but the underlying theory of social stress and social crisis that is elaborated

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by the authors of *The Authoritarian Personality*. It is a theory based upon "catastrophic realism," a difficult approach beset with many pitfalls. To what extent did the authors avoid them?

"CATASTROPHIC realism" can be useful, I think, either for analysis or for action, only if it is made clear that it does not concern itself with the situation as it is today in a democratic society, or with anything that may develop spontaneously any day, but with a set of circumstances that might emerge under hypothetical, radically altered conditions. Thus, if we want to study ethnic prejudice as a "potentially fascist" pattern, we have to ask not only in what way the thinking of the hater parallels the dominant social theory and practices of, say, Nazism, but also what conditions other than the existence of prejudice must be present before prejudice can play in society at large the role it played in Nazi Germany. The authors do ask this question, and though they, understandably, do not put forward a reasoned theory of fascism, they give a clear enough indication of what they conceive its essence to be.

The basic idea is put forcefully in the introduction to *The Authoritarian Personality*. Fascism is essentially and closely correlated with the efforts of the "dominant economic interests" to preserve their privileged status.

"It seems well understood today that whether or not antidemocratic propaganda is to become a dominant force in this country depends primarily upon the situation of the most powerful economic interests, upon whether they, by conscious design or not, make use of this device for maintaining their dominant status. This is a matter about which the great majority of people would have little to say." (Page 7.)

A change in the dominant status of the most powerful economic interests, the argument continues, would be inherently beneficial to all sectors of the majority. If the masses could be expected to act in accordance with their own interests, the necessary change would be effected in a democratic fashion. But it is possible for the small circle of economic power-holders to induce the vast majority to act against its own interests. All they need to bring this about is to divert the strivings of the majority towards abnormal, irrational, emotional goals:

"Since by its very nature it [fascism] favors the few at the expense of the many, it cannot possibly demonstrate that it will so improve the situation of most people that their real interests will be served. It must therefore make its major appeal, not to self-interest, but to emotional needs—often the most primitive and irrational wishes and fears. If it be argued that fascist propaganda fools people into believing that their lot will be improved, then the question arises: Why are they so easily fooled? Because, it may be supposed, of their personality structure." (Page 10.)

It would be hard to imagine a more perfect specimen of the "devil theory" of social catastrophe. Everything is here: the tiny, selfish, powerful minority whose interests are radically opposed to those of the people at large, and which nevertheless is able to mislead the majority, to make it act against its own interests. The masses, indeed, play in this picture exactly the role which, according to *Prophets of Deceit*, the fascist "agitators" assign them: that of "dupes and suckers" (p. 21). It is somewhat strange that the authors, with their profound insight into the psychology of prejudice, have never stopped to ask themselves whether they might not have fallen victim to that same insidious psychological mechanism. Do they actually believe that the type of theory the "agitators" use, with its "conspiracy complex" and its "contempt for the masses," becomes pure science when the "most powerful economic interests" are substituted for the Jews or the Communists? Bebel once said that anti-Semitism is the socialism of the ignorant. Is socialism to become the anti-Semitism, so to speak, of the learned?

TO BE sure, some elements of this picture of the genesis of fascist totalitarianism are true to fact. The Nazi movement certainly was spearheaded by pathological personalities, and its triumph could not be explained without assuming that the entire cultural situation was such as to increase the influence of pathological individuals. It is also true that the Nazis were opposed to the democratic "welfare state" and that their rise was desired by, and profitable to, dominant economic groups. But the connection between these facts and the role they played in the genesis of fascism seems radically misconstrued by the theory. The explanation falls down for two reasons. First, in the crisis which gave rise to Nazism there was no clear-cut cleavage of the "true" interests of the plutocracy on the one hand and those of everybody else on the other. Second, we cannot assume that seduction by irrational propaganda was the main obstacle in

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the way of united action to defend popular against plutocratic interests.

We have to remember, first, that Nazism rose up as a political force during an economic crisis. As long as times were normal the influence of its pathological propaganda was small. When, in the crisis, its influence became great, its function was not that of inhibiting an otherwise possible resolution of the crisis by which all popular groups would have profited at the sole expense of the plutocrats. For such a solution did not exist. Actually, both "rational" economic interests and "pathological" propagandistic influences in the German crisis present a far more chaotic picture. The interests of some of the large popular groups (workers, unemployed, farmers, small bourgeoisie) were in part mutually antagonistic, but in some respects the interests of popular groups converged with those of some economically leading groups. A "rational" and democratic solution would have involved sacrifices by all groups and gains shared among all groups. But such a sober program could get no hearing, mainly because, under the impact of panic, too many people came to believe that only spectacular and extraordinary measures could help, and at the same time were mortally afraid that someone might apply such measures against *them*. As this mood became dominant, opposite extremisms — of the Nazi and Communist brand — fed each other, so that the prospects of a democratic, non-extremist solution became dimmer and dimmer.

It is not true to say that extremists on either side neglected to focus attention on immediate bread-and-butter interests. Promises of prosperity for all played a tremendous role in Nazi propaganda. Much of this was hokum, but not all. The masses who followed the Nazis did not consist only of suckers. It would be wrong to see solely the illusions and myths which induced lower-class Germans to support the Nazis, and overlook the hard-headed calculations of some of the lower-class Germans. The farmers were the most hard-headed of all: they bid for heavy state support, and they got it. The Nazis also promised a glittering prize to labor: the end of unemployment. Labor did not follow them, but became largely reconciled once unemployment was in fact ended by Hitler's regime. (This, of course, involved rearmament, which became the germ of tremendous later disasters. My thesis is not that the Nazis' solution was a blessing to the "many" in the long run, but merely that in order to win support they had to offer substantial material benefits as well as emotional orgies to the mass of Germans.)

I THINK, then, that we must reject the theory of crisis in terms of which the authors envisage the problem of potential fascism. It is true that in a long and severe crisis the influence of the pathological sector of our population would grow and that of the fair-minded and moderate wane. But we cannot solve this problem by a competition in scapegoating. The real problem is how to maintain the influence of sane and democratic counsels in spite of a crisis. This is a task for all groups and classes. The more people engage in preaching doom for one group as the condition of salvation of everybody else, the less probable it is that the crisis will be resolved in democratic fashion. To end a crisis in a democratic way, the theme to propagate is that everybody is in the same boat rather than that the boat will sink unless a guilty member of the crew is thrown overboard.

All this has nothing to do with a general denial of the class tensions and antagonisms in our society. I am not saying that all the interests of capital and labor are always parallel, and that labor should never antagonize capital. I am suggesting that a crisis is the worst possible time in which to try to benefit labor at the expense of capital. Redistribution can be successful only if there is something to redistribute; and extremist controls are not likely to set the machinery rolling.

THE basic question is, however, not what to do when a crisis comes, but how to prevent a crisis, how to build a better society. This is a matter of social ideals as well as of social techniques. Commitment to a set of social ideals runs through the entire discussion in *The Authoritarian Personality* and animates the whole treatment of the material. The key values are: militant liberalism, defined by the authors so as to imply not only a pro-labor stand but also an orientation in favor of basic socialist reforms; and pro-democracy, defined as implying rejection of all anti-minority prejudice. The main things to be opposed are: the status quo, the "existent," the powers that be, and anti-democracy, which is defined as fascism; poverty, exploitation, inhumanity, prejudice.

The authors' ideal social personality is the "prototypic liberal" (*Authoritarian Personality*, p. 176). But they do not suggest that all conservatives are to be considered equally "poten-

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tial fascists." On the contrary, they distinguish between "genuine conservatives" and "pseudo-conservatives," of whom only the latter are "potential fascists." As to the "genuine" conservatives, they support "not only capitalism in its liberal, individualistic form but also those tenets of traditional Americanism which are definitely anti-repressive and sincerely democratic, as indicated by an unqualified rejection of anti-minority prejudices" (p. 675). Thus what the authors say is not that all "liberalism" is good and all "conservatism" is bad. Conservatism, if "genuine," is also good — but this conservatism is presented as a relic of the past, when American capitalism was individualistic and progressive (p. 662). As to the conservatives who would preserve things as they are now, they are clearly "pseudo" rather than "genuine"; they are linked to fascism and threaten to destroy the basically liberal American tradition, even though they pay lip-service to it (p. 676). The authors' own liberalism is plainly conservative insofar as the American Constitutional tradition is concerned. They call for "progressive change" in the present socio-economic order because they think this order is inherently antithetical to, and destructive of, the liberal Constitutional tradition. It is not stated explicitly, but implied in the whole argument, that the "genuine" conservatives cannot offer a workable program for a good society. That can come only from the "militant" liberals.

WHAT are the basic assumptions and principles characterizing the militant liberal position? We may mention the following:

(1) The liberal is resolutely utopian. To him, the view that the ideally just and happy society cannot be built is a "lie" (p. 697).

(2) The liberal rejects the "profit system." He wishes to replace "production for profit" by "an economic organization molded after the needs of the population" (p. 725).

(3) To the liberal, "the conviction that people would not work unless subject to pressure" is "a way of reasoning closely related to vilification of human nature and cynicism" (p. 699).

(4) From the liberal point of view, "the causes of poverty are seen, not in the innate stupidity of the poor, but in the politico-economic organization of society which, by virtue of its concentration of economic power, creates poverty as a symptom" (p. 155).

(5) The liberal deplores the fact that "today's labor movement, instead of aiming at a better society, is satisfied with securing certain advantages and privileges within the existing society" (p. 704).

(6) According to the liberal, skepticism about world government and permanent peace denotes "nationalism and cynicism" (p. 148).

It seems to me that a liberalism of this sort is characterized far more by highly charged emotional bias than by real insight into the workings of society. Dogmatic myths dating back to early popular socialist literature are taken over without the slightest critical examination, and those who oppose them are charged with moral shortcomings such as mendacity, contempt for man, and cynicism. A detailed examination of all six points would be instructive, but I think we can dispense with it; I shall make only a few remarks about points 3 (work under pressure) and 4 (the causes of poverty).

The assertion that in a suitably organized society all biologically and culturally necessary work will be done without any "pressure" but solely on the basis of the attractiveness of the kind of work itself, is a pure myth. Of course, many kinds of work are in themselves not unpleasant and people will engage in them, among other things, because they like them. But, first, such satisfaction in work cannot as a rule develop without some sort of pressure: the individual must learn to like his work, and to learn ways of behavior always involves some pressure. Second, no society could survive without also providing incentives for those types of necessary work that are not attractive as such. And all incentive presupposes some pressure.

As to the "causes of poverty," note that the thesis is put in the form of a loaded alternative: you believe either that poverty is due to the innate stupidity of the poor or that it is due to the high concentration of property. Actually, both explanations are myths. Dire poverty can exist in societies without any high concentration of property, and mass standards of living can be high in societies with highly developed and concentrated industrial capital. Of course, we see poverty even in countries where the standard of living is generally high; but we cannot assume that such poverty would disappear if the concentration of capital were reduced.

I think it would be highly desirable if social scientists in general showed less inclination to formulate the basic values of society in such naive terms. Not that they should cease to adhere to liberal values, but the basic values of liberalism are too often put in a crude and in-

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tolerant way — even though the degree of biased naivety shown in this volume is seldom equaled. This is a great pity. For social science has a supremely important contribution to make to the basic discussion of our time, that concerning the future of our society.

There is a long-range trend towards socialism, and important human values and aspirations are defended by both the forces that favor the trend and those that attack it. It should be the task of social science so to analyze the issue that the discussion could be conducted in terms of realities rather than myths. Social scientists should neither merely deplore, and strain against, the secular trend, nor push it forward by leaving the utopian myths nourishing the socialist mystique unexamined. Science should tell us, as accurately as possible, what any proposed institutional change or absence of change would mean in terms of material satisfactions and good human relations. This calls for a critical indifference towards the interested arguments put forward by special pleaders on both sides in the form of either blanket promises of utopia or wholesale prophecies of doom. If people can be educated to abandon mythical thinking on these subjects, one may perhaps hope to see a smooth, gradual transition towards new forms of social control wherever old ones become impracticable, but without damage to democratic values. On this score, much of the thinking in this volume represents regression to a more primitive level of discourse rather than progress towards realism and maturity.

To all this, the authors might retort that their own value position, whether one agrees with it or not, is not germane to the issue. For the "militant liberal" ideology they have outlined is not merely something they espouse, rightly or wrongly. Rather, the cluster of attitudes which includes the positions on utopia, the profit system, work, poverty, and world peace, is statistically most highly correlated with the absence of ethnic prejudice. That is, the evidence in this study shows that if one indeed believes that utopia is possible, if one rejects the "profit system," and so on, one will also be unprejudiced towards Jews and Negroes. This, the authors could argue, is simply an empirical, statistical fact which the student of prejudice has to record as he finds it. Whether this militant liberalism is reasonable and realistic or whether it is the opposite, it is at least the type of attitude towards which non-prejudiced thinking seems to tend. Although there are many complications in the picture, it appears, by and large, that it is the "conformists" — those who accept society as it is — who are most prejudiced towards minorities, and the "rebels" and "non-conformists" who are least so.

The finding itself may stand, I think, as a rough approximation. But the question is how we evaluate it. Two considerations arise in this connection. First, are we justified in idealizing that cluster of attitudes which seems most highly correlated with the one value we are interested in at the moment? That is, if we are interested in eliminating prejudice, are we right in completely approving the "militant liberalism" which is today associated with lack of it? And second, can we expect that this value of freedom from prejudice will reach its greatest strength in our society when, and only when, the cluster of liberal attitudes with which it is now most highly correlated reaches *its* greatest strength? I think the answer to both questions is no.

Absence of ethnic prejudice is certainly an important virtue. It is one of the necessary conditions for a truly democratic ordering of interpersonal and inter-group relations. But in itself it does not *define* the democratic attitude. A sub-group in our society may score very low on ethnic prejudice and yet fail to represent a pro-democratic social force. Examples are not hard to find. We know that the Communists combine advocacy of non-discrimination on ethnic matters with an insatiable greed for monopolizing the whole social decision process, and complete disregard for personal rights. But the authors' method of assessing pro- and anti-democratic potentialities in sub-groups is such as to make it practically impossible to recognize, and to deal with, such combinations. The method throws all "low scorers" and all "high scorers" on ethnic prejudice together into two separate groups, as if these groups were sociological realities. The group of "low scorers," however, has no actual, sociological existence; it is a pure artifact of statistical combination. To link the defense of democracy to such an artifact is a great mistake. The seriousness of this mistake becomes apparent in connection with the mostly very unsatisfactory way in which the authors deal with the problem of democracy and attitudes towards Communism.

This takes us to our second question. Can we expect that ethnic prejudice will tend to disappear as we find more and more people

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scoring "low" on ethnic prejudice but "high" on other types of group aggression? That is, will prejudice disappear as more and more people become "militant liberals"? The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* seem to think so. But we cannot assume that the over-all incidence of a characteristic — in this case, freedom from prejudice — depends only on the relative size of the group in which it is statistically most prevalent — in this case, militant liberals. The growth of such a group may do something to the other groups in society; if it scores "high" on some types of aggression, its high aggressiveness breeds counter-aggression, and what we can expect is the strengthening and exacerbation of *all* aggressive patterns of behavior. In other words, if the "militant liberal" attitude becomes more widespread, the attitudes opposing it — including among them prejudice — may also become more widespread. Extremely aggressive "liberalism" can drive many of the latently prejudiced into aggressive race hatred.

All this is obscured by the main methodological device used in *The Authoritarian Personality*, which consists basically in the construction of a continuum of attitudes on ethnic prejudice, and the selection of those who score highest and those who score lowest for special analysis and close study. To be a useful tool in analyzing the factors theatening and supporting democracy, the analysis of these two groups scoring very high and very low in *prejudice* should have been supplemented by another analysis of the groups scoring "high" and "low" on *group aggression in general*. This, of course, would have transcended the task the authors set themselves, and nobody can blame them for having treated only one area of social aggression. The trouble with their approach is only that it tends to confuse those who wish to consider the entire field of threats to, and safeguards for, democracy.

To sum up: It is possible to study ethnic prejudice from a conservative viewpoint, as something unfortunate in itself and curable by itself, without considering its possible role in undermining our democratic system as a whole. This was done in *Dynamics of Prejudice*, in *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder*, and in large parts of *The Authoritarian Personality* as well. It is also possible to examine the "catastrophic" implications of prejudice, to examine what role prejudice might play in destroying our democratic order and replacing it with fascism; this was attempted in part by *The Authoritarian Personality* and also, in a way, in *Prophets of Deceit*. The first job can be done either by intensive analysis of a small number of cases — as was superbly done in *Anti-Semitism and Emotional Disorder* — or by statistical analysis. But in order to do the second, it is not sufficient to simply determine who rejects ethnic prejudice in our society today, and then conclude that the attitudes of the groups most strongly rejecting prejudice represent the only possible hope for a liberal and democratic society. This approach cannot reveal to us how our democratic order may survive, for we must first see whether the attitudes associated with freedom from prejudice may not be dangerous to democracy in their own right and in other areas.

I do not deny that there is a considerable moral difference between an attitude aiming at "saving society" by crushing racial minorities, and one aiming at "improving society" by abolishing unjust privileges. But it is easy to fall into dangerous illusions by recognizing only the former attitude as a threat to democracy. The fight against "privileges," while morally valuable in itself, may degenerate into putting a new privileged class in the place of an old one. And while old "privileges" are often attenuated by the bad conscience of their holders as well as by the presence of counter-forces and counter-pressures, the new privileges the "liberators" claim for themselves may become more oppressive than the old ones had been. This will happen if the "liberators" *deny* that their monopoly of social control represents any privilege at all; if they treat the new privileges as simply their due reward for social services rendered. Sometimes those who are most vocal against unjust privileges in existing society seem entirely unconcerned about the possible moral pitfalls inherent in their position. To treat all those who are privileged (to whatever extent) in an existing social order as criminals who must be crushed and punished is not a morally valid idea. If those who do the punishing become themselves privileged in the process, the idea becomes totally monstrous.

Hence, I cannot recognize that the only choice we have is between aggression against racial minorities, and aggression against privileged economic minorities. Both morally and materially, aggression, directed against whatever group, is a "catastrophic" solution indeed; and it is a serious error in this "catastrophic" analysis of prejudice to suggest that only aggression against the latter group can ward off aggression against the former.

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LETTERS FROM READERS

Battle of the Folk Songs

To the Editor of Commentary:

A friend of mine, frequently called upon to review books for the press, once remarked facetiously that he never reads a book before reviewing it lest he become prejudiced thereby. After reading Chemjo Vinaver's review of my volume *Songs We Sing* ("Alas for Jewish Folk Songs!" in the January issue of Commentary), I cannot escape the conclusion that in this instance, at least, he subscribed to a modification of the same approach, not reading beyond the first few pages for fear of finding something he liked.

Songs We Sing is a graded compilation of 265 songs, reflecting the various periods and lands in the history of our people and representing the work of a variety of composers, arrangers, and poets. It is not—Mr. Vinaver's title notwithstanding—an anthology of Jewish folk songs. On the contrary, the preponderant majority of its songs are from the pens of eminent composers. *Songs We Sing* is also not a scientific treatise for scholars or future research students. As stated in the foreword—which, though quoted, was evidently not understood—it is primarily a book for school, home, and community use. Any comparison to be made should, therefore, be not with the Habad compilation, whose purpose is obviously different from ours, but with music materials designed for schools.

In such song collections, as in ours, Mr. Vinaver will find much material not to the complete liking of musicians. To music educators, however, it is a truism that one starts with the musical experience of the child and gradually leads him to the better and more complex. Music is not vulgarized if one begins even with "Chopsticks" so long as the visible objective is the Bach fugue. *Songs We Sing* is, therefore, a composite both of what is being sung—whether we like it or not—and of what we hope will eventually be sung. Whether the pseudo-Jewish or non-Jewish elements will remain or ultimately be rejected it is difficult to prognosticate. The "folk instinct" which preserved purity in the past, and the disappearance of which Mr. Vinaver laments, was not always as unerring as he would imply. . . . Consider, as only one example, the matter of the preservation and continued popularity for over three hundred years of a song like "Rock of Ages"—an amalgam of three Christian hymns.

As to the authenticity of the versions of the folk songs contained in *Songs We Sing,* it seems futile to cite authorities. A reviewer who makes a statement like "whoever first published it, killed it" conveys the impression that he recognizes no authority but himself. But the editor of *Songs We Sing* is no novice in the profession, nor does he assume his responsibilities lightly. Before the publication of *Songs of Zion* (1942), he spent years collecting his material and checking—through a visit to Palestine—with the composers of the songs, with Palestinian musicians, and with published versions in Palestine and abroad. In but two instances, out of this collection of over two hundred songs, were corrections called for after publication.

It is within the nature of a folk song to have many versions current. One need only peruse the contents of American song anthologies to be impressed with this fact. How much more true must this be of our infinitely older Jewish song! The vast majority of the Hasidic songs fall within the folk-song category. Though they are often ascribed to a particular individual, in most instances they are the collective product of a group, sometimes originating within the group itself, sometimes being borrowed from neighbors, but always shaped and molded by the group, in its own image. The editor spent countless hours in Hasidic *shtiblech* here, in Palestine, and in Europe, and found that even the disciples of the same cult rarely reproduced the same song in like fashion. If Mr. Vinaver does not find my versions to his taste, I can only say that I am equally irked by his.

"En Kelohenu," which Vinaver discovered for the first time in the play *Yoshe Kalb* in parodied form, is, in fact, of much earlier origin than that. I learned this song, in but slightly modified form, in my early childhood in the Ukraine, from my grandfather. I was exceedingly gratified to find that Dr. Eric Werner, beyond doubt the outstanding Jewish musicologist of our day, included this same song in *Israel Sings,* the record album based on the Birnbaum collection which attributes the song to Baruch Karliner and gives the date of its origin as 1830. To characterize the song as ludicrous because it was parodied on the stage

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would imply the invalidation of most of the Hasidic songs because they were almost all burlesqued by the Misnagdim.

The reviewer's easily perturbed sensibilities were also offended by my "Shabbat Kodesh," a melody set to a children's poem. On the basis of it he took occasion to express himself on the use of the major key in Sabbath music. Actually, such expression is irrelevant since this song, as its words indicate, is not a Sabbath song but rather a gay little ditty about the child's participation in marketing for the Sabbath. It's "jig"-like character is international and appropriate.

Mr. Vinaver may or may not like my songs; that is a matter of taste. But if he is concerned with their Jewish orientation why does he overlook such songs as "Ba'a Shabbat," which is in the "Mogen Ovos" mode; "For Purim," which utilizes the Megillah motives; "Heroes of the Law," "Helm Song," the cantillations, and many others?

In all objectivity, is it conceivable that an anthology to which the major Jewish composers of our time—Fromm, Schalit, Werner, Weinberg, Binder, Achron, Kosakoff, Milhaud, L. Bernstein (to mention but a few)—contributed, should merit not one comment of approbation? How can a reviewer fail to find it noteworthy that through this book and at the behest of the editor, about fifty new songs and as many arrangements of old ones came into being, thus enriching our music literature immeasurably? Is it believable that the attractiveness of a book should also be subjected to derision? If Mr. Vinaver is concerned with presenting songs in their pristine beauty why does he trouble to dress his choir in robes and himself in tails for public performances?

No! I am not fearful of what the future student of music may find in this collection. The least learned of them will bring to it a greater understanding and a finer perspective.

HARRY COOPERSMITH
Music Director
Jewish Education Committee of New York
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

We were pleased to see from Mr. Vinaver's review of Ruth Rubin's *A Treasury of Jewish Folksong* that there is discriminating criticism to reckon with in publishing Jewish folklore. However—and this despite our own reservations about Mrs. Rubin's work—we feel that some of the canons by which Mr. Vinaver condemns the book are not in agreement with widely accepted principles of contemporary folkloristics. . . . Folk songs exist in many variants, none of which is, in principle, more "correct" than any other. To argue about the "correctness" of one folk-song variant is to create a pseudo-problem. . . . Mr. Vinaver speaks of "the true folk idiom" and "the character of the Jewish folk song," as if these elusive things had already been described definitively by the standards of modern folk-song research. Until that is done, these concepts remain a matter of intuition and one taste is, in principle, as good as another. . . .

Incidentally, Mr. Vinaver is right in saying that *zayt gezunterheyt* is not normal Yiddish syntax, but it is nevertheless true that in folk songs many abnormal and unanalyzable constructions do occur. In point of fact, this particular phrase does occur in the folk song.

URIEL AND BEATRICE WEINREICH
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Chemjo Vinaver's instinct and knowledge in matters of Jewish music are unerring and unquestioned. May I point out, however, that Mrs. Rubin, in *A Treasury of Jewish Folksong*, merely copied our foremost authority in the field, Y. L. Cahan (*Yiddish Folksongs*, New York, 1920) in using a quarter note on the first syllable of "Chatskele." However, I believe Vinaver is entirely correct in favoring the dotted eighth. . . . The setting of "Mit a Nodel, On a Nodel" in three-four time is likewise not an innovation of Mrs. Rubin's: it is thus recorded in Beregowsky's collection. As is true with all folk music, variations in both music and text occur in our folk songs as well.

Permit me to echo the sentiments of Mr. Vinaver in his concern over the lack of knowledge of Hebrew and Yiddish by those who sing our folk songs, and those who lecture and write on them. Some years ago I heard a well-known radio artist sing "Boruch El Elyon" by Z. Zilberts. In the first verse of the song occur the words *ad ono* ("until when"). The singer thought these two words were one, spelling the name of God. Not wishing to pronounce the name of God in vain, he sang *"Adoshem."*

I should also like to join Mr. Vinaver in condemning the injudicious introduction of pseudo-Hasidic tunes in the synagogue service.

CANTOR MAX WOHLBERG
Congregation Beth El
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mr. Vinaver Replies

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Mr. Coopersmith is trying to be witty when he implies that I read his book only perfunctorily. Some reviewers have the bad habit of wading through all the material, whether they like it or not; I confess to belonging to that old-fashioned school. Nothing escaped me, nor did

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I—who could possibly?—mistake this song compilation for a "scientific treatise." Its purpose is quite clear. So is the fact that it contains, in Mr. Coopersmith's own words, "much material not to the complete liking of musicians."

I must insist on rejecting that sort of Jewish music education which conceives of the second-rate as good enough to start with, feeding our children Jewish "Chopsticks"—such as gay little Sabbath ditties, intentional or unintentional Sabbath-jigs, pseudo-Jewish numbers—and feeling fine about it "so long as the visible objective is the Bach fugue." Experience should have taught us by now that such an "education" usually leads to the point where the Bach fugue is turned into a perennial "visible objective" to which lip service is paid while in reality the taste develops toward "Chopsticks"-Bach or "Chopsticks"-Mozart—those vulgarized popular "arrangements" of the classics that clutter our music market. But why drag Bach in at this stage of the game? Let's first attend to the weeds in our own little back yard.

Mr. Coopersmith is anxious to prove that he is "no novice in the profession," and that he took all precautions before submitting his book for publication. It is indeed regrettable that he had to labor so hard in order to produce this sad compilation—even to the extent of "spending countless hours" in Hasidic *shtiblech* . . . !

Folk-song variants—nobody questions their existence. But even among variants there are only two categories for the expert: authentic ones—and the rest. This is especially true of religious folk song, such as Hasidic song, where the intangibles play an important role and must be familiar to him who would notate a melody. "Research" or "countless hours" spent with "Hasidim" just won't do. Most of this music is oral heritage, its notation, therefore, a crucial matter. What to Mr. Coopersmith is "but slightly modified form"—here it does mean something. Such "modifications" may transform silver into tin—as evidenced by Mr. Coopersmith's versions of "Sbiru Ladonoi," "En Kelohenu," etc. His "En Kelohenu," indeed, bears painfully close resemblance to the parody used on the Yiddish stage. This observation does not necessarily imply that the tune originated with a stage production of the 1930's; such parodies may be of "venerable" age, dating back to the past century, when, with the general decline of Hasidism, Hasidic song began to deteriorate. The intentional parodies of the Misnagdim are only one aspect of that "heritage"; another is the paltry tunes made up by the Hasidim themselves during that late phase. The fact that one hears a "Hasidic" tune from one's East European grandfather does not in itself constitute a guarantee of its worth or authenticity. Inability to separate the wheat from the chaff has been a constant source of confusion, and not to the layman alone. Successions of stage-struck singers, ignorant not merely of Hasidic music, have picked up "Hasidic numbers" from stage and street, from *badchonim* (wedding jesters) and similar sources, and cheerfully dished them up as Hasidic *nigunim*, and music collectors, both private and institutional, have time and again been victims of this confusion.

As regards the editor's indignation at my failure to praise him for "immeasurably enriching" our music literature by the addition of a number of songs by contemporary composers (some of them "names") to the maudlin bulk of his volume, it painfully reminds one of the story of the Israeli carpenter. A lawyer-turned-carpenter in Israel delivered his first masterpiece, a chair. It evoked complaints: one of the legs was shorter than the rest and made the chair useless. The new carpenter replied indignantly, "Everybody harps on this one short leg. What about the three good ones?"

Since Mr. Coopersmith thought it relevant to raise the question: It is in compliance with the prevailing custom of the legitimate concert stage that the Vinaver Chorus wears the uniforms accepted for public performance: choir robes for the choir singers and full dress suit for the conductor. Perhaps this is a bit too conservative. Were we to match the decorative spirit exhibited in his book, whose pages keep sprouting overgenerous supplies of Stars of David, menorahs, Torah scrolls, and other holy accessories, we should at least have to equip the choir singers with one *shofar* apiece for synagogue chants, with *kaftan* and sidelocks for Hasidic music, etc., etc.

As to the letter of Mr. and Mrs. Weinreich, and, in part, Cantor Wohlberg's letter, I can only repeat: even variations carry the earmarks of authenticity and distortion. As I stated quite clearly, "Occasionally it is appropriate for an editor to ignore his predecessors in the field and to score a folk melody according to his own understanding." But, I added, "such a delicate task must remain the rare privilege of an expert." I questioned Miss Rubin's ability to evaluate the authenticity of Jewish folk songs; moreover I was forced to discover that she has not even mastered the technique of notation.

As to the "true folk idiom": I take the liberty of insisting that there is such a thing and that there are people alive who have heard it. I am also aware that those forced to wait for a research commission to hand them a sealed certificate of its actual existence, will never find it.

Chemjo Vinaver

New York City

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Sic!

THE HEBREW IMPACT ON WESTERN CIVILIZATION. Edited by DAGOBERT D. RUNES. Philosophical Library. 922 pp. $10.00.

Reviewed by ALLEN MANDELBAUM

THE Philosophical Library has published an imposing volume in *The Hebrew Impact on Western Civilization*. Over nine hundred pages, seventeen contributors, eighteen essays, a moving dedication to "the sainted memory of the six million," and a purchase price of ten dollars—cry a come-all-ye to "the many, many people in whose midst the Hebrews have lived for thousands of years" (Dr. Runes's preface).

But only the innocent will lend an ear to the pitch, for were Dr. Runes inclined to accuracy, his Table of Contents would read:

1. INFANTILE APOLOGETICS, HOLLOW FANFARONADES

Mr. Hugo Bieber, in an essay on "Jews in Public Office," sets out to prove that Jewish political activities are not bound "to favor radicalism and revolution" and that "there was, and is, no contradiction between their [i.e., Jews'] allegiance to the non-Jewish country where they live, and their loyalty to Judaism." We are then confronted with tax collectors, moneylenders, minters, court Jews, politicians, mayors, cabinet ministers, etc. We learn, too, that Herbert H. Lehman "occasionally . . . restored law and order with courage and energy."

Richard Van Dyck further reassures us, in "The Jewish Influence on Journalism," that "Wherever the glorious annals of journalism are written, Jewish newspapermen will be prominent and thus help refute effectively the age-old lie that Jewish journalism necessarily is subversive."

But enough of timid trumpets; the crowning flourish is William B. Ziff's seventy-one page eulogy of "The Jew as Soldier, Strategist and Military Adviser." In pursuing his thesis that "as a fighting people [the Jews] have not been excelled anywhere," the writer drowns out Isaiah, Johanan ben Zakkai, and other troublesome reeds in a lusty *laudamus* for slaughter. The illustrious names of Mussolini's Jewish cohorts, or "others . . . at least half-Jewish by blood" who aided Hitler, are not enough; Bergson and Freud are *anschluss*-ed in, for they helped develop the principles on which "the important German psychological warfare branch" rested.

2. TENPINS FOR S. J. PERELMAN

Most assiduous in setting them up is Dr. Abraham I. Katsh, who leads off the volume with an essay on "The Hebraic Foundations of American Democracy." Dr. Katsh's formula calls for a quotation from a source (secondary, to be sure) followed by succinct restatement:

" 'Three-fourths of human life are conduct. Hebrew Scriptures deal pre-eminently with conduct. Their influence, at any rate on the English-speaking portion of our Western civilization, is three times as important as the influence of the Greeks' [a quotation from J. C. Powys]. It would appear from this that one might say that the civilization of Great Britain was influenced by Hebrew Scriptures and by Greek philosophy at a proportion of three to one respectively."

Mr. Van Dyck achieves a defter anticlimax, dead-pan, recounting the life of one Oppert-Blowitz:

"During an outing in a rowboat in the harbor of Marseilles, Blowitz and his lady allegedly threw the sleeping husband overboard and let him drown quietly.

"Be that as it may, it is fact that, while in Paris, Mr. Oppert-Blowitz became acquainted with Prime Minister Thiers."

3. AS THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY

Dr. Katsh confounds us with:

"As world attitude changed, the Jews were treated accordingly. As the Middle Ages gave way to the Renaissance, they were able to assume a new position in the emerging world

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with little effort. The Age of Enlightenment still found them adhering to the old truths. Industrialization affected them as a people almost not at all. Great individuals rose from their ranks as they always had in the past. Now we have emerged into the Atomic Age, and here, too, is valid the basic contribution of the Jews to civilization. As man has pushed back the horizons of learning, he has sought to apply the principles which for over 2,000 years have guided him. Expression and explanation of this opinion is found in every literature but in none more profoundly than the English."

More exotic (owing, I imagine, to literal translation from the German) is almost all of Curtis Lubinski's "The Jew in Drama, Theatre, and Film." Witness the following consecutive paragraphs:

"Two lovable personalities died, Paul Graetz in Hollywood and Alexander Granach in New York while appearing in the Broadway cast of *A Bell for Adano*. He appeared together with Greta Garbo and Felix Bressart in *Ninotchka*. The film performance of the late Conrad Veidt as Jud Süss is an unforgettable one.

"The playwrights come and go with the actors. It may work the other way around. Any way, when the Jewish performers rose to fame on the German stage, the heydays had dawned for the Jewish dramatists. Their present day generation left Germany and enriched the literature of their new chosen fatherland."

Though sentences might seem more immune than paragraphs to dislocation, nothing escapes the inattention of Dr. Runes in this work. Since it is probable that the countless instances of grotesque and bizarre prose are in part the responsibility of the translators and editor, it is only fair to the authors not to dwell upon them.

4. Misinformation, Please

A few among the tic-inducers are:

Misdatings: Franz Rosenzweig died in 1929, not 1922; Max Brod was born in 1884, not 1844; Richard Beer-Hofmann was born in 1866, not 1886; Paul Lazarsfeld was born in 1901, not 1915; Herzl's *Der Judenstaat* appeared in 1896, not 1869.

Metamorphoses: Graham Wallas becomes Graham Wallace; Sidney Hook joins the City College faculty; the banner of Schelling becomes the ban of Schelling; Durban becomes Durham; Galut, or Galuth, becomes Galud; the Rambam becomes the Ramban; and to top it all, H. L. Mencken becomes a Jew.

5. Trivia

The most offensive examples are Mr. Lubinski's Hedda-Hopperism, "Queen Mary kissed her [Elisabeth Bergner] on the cheek in tribute to her acting"; and A. A. Roback's coy retelling, in "The Jew in Modern Science," of his own discovery that Cantor introduced a Hebrew symbol, the *aleph*, into mathematics. But let Mr. Roback speak for himself:

"While a student, I once had occasion to look into a ponderous and highly technical work of Bertrand Russell (*Principles of Mathematics*), probably the clearest philosophical mind of our generation; and was struck by a very familiar symbol. At first I thought that the resemblance between the particular symbol and the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet was but a coincidence. But no, a moment's scrutiny convinced me that the character was identical with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

"The next question was: Did Russell first introduce the aleph into mathematics, or was there a Jewish hand in it? Naturally the latter hypothesis seemed more reasonable, though we know that often Jewish scientists will go out of their way to conceal their ethnic origin, and might likely draw on a Sanskrit or Chinese source . . ." and on and on.

6. Outside the Pale

Apparently while the editor was napping, Cecil Roth, the distinguished historian, slipped in with an able and interesting essay on "Jewish Cultural Influence in the Middle Ages." But twelve pages seem less than a warm-up, especially in a volume which allows Mr. Ziff seventy-one. Vergilius Ferm, too, provides some reasonable prose, though less consistently, in "The Fountainhead of Western Religion" (also very short).

Normal, if hardly distinguished, standards of exposition are maintained in Maurice J. Karpf's "Jewish Social Service and Its Impact upon Western Civilization" (which is marred, however, by homiletics), the late L. L. Bernard's "Jewish Sociologists and Political Scientists" (though it bogs down too often in catalogues), and Walter Sorell's "Israel and the Dance." Fortunately free from catalogue-itis are Martin L. Wolf's "The Jew and the Law" and Richard Van Dyck's "The Jewish Influence on Journalism."

In a volume marked by atrocious editorial negligence, the chief sufferers are Paul Nettl's "Judaism and Music" and Karl Schwarz's "The

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Hebrew Impact on Western Art." Both essays are, potentially, worthy contributions, and certainly merited some normal editorial attention. Less chaotic prose, more coherent structure, and more effective emphases would have strengthened them considerably. And Mr. Schwarz's essay, in a volume of this price, should have been accompanied by illustrations (at least of the synagogue at Dura Europos, an important link in the chain of his argument). Funds for this might well have come from the publisher's obvious saving on binding and proofreading.

Where the Rich Are Human

POOR COUSIN EVELYN. By JAMES YAFFE. Little, Brown. 269 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by ISA KAPP

WITH few exceptions, American writers have introduced us to American wealth only in its public aspect: the clubs, limousines, and broken engagements that are the province of the rotogravure. They have put aside a more interesting subject, the phenomenon of luxury generating its own philosophy as well as its own manners, the whole *intimate* culture of the upper classes. But, for once, in James Yaffe's short stories about the Jews who live in Park Avenue penthouses and West End Avenue terrace apartments, the rich show their private faces. Yaffe sensibly removes them from the world of display, and even from the places where they dramatically bargained for success, onto the parlor sofa where that success is finally savored.

It is just at home, in his moments of pretended relaxation, that the Jew of these stories is most identifiable as a businessman. His fireside comfort drives him to retell a thousand times the robust anecdotes about his associates and his pinochle partners. But never dully—these episodes are constantly reanimated by his pride in the extravagantly gregarious career he has chosen. As raconteur, he proves over and over that the functioning of his business—and not its profits—constitutes for him the ultimate glamor and moral purpose of secular life. His ascent to Park Avenue is no reason for a change in values: its implausibility only confirms him in his idolatry of work.

IN THE story "Mr. Feldman," a father indicates his willingness to have his son become a writer—so long as the boy agrees to think of writing as a kind of business.

"So tell me, son. What kind of writing do you write?"

"I don't get you, Dad."

"Tell me something you've written. Have you written a poem maybe? . . ."

. . . "I don't write poetry, Dad."

"You don't write poetry. Then you write stories, maybe? Like in the magazines. So, what kind of stories? Love stories? Women go crazy for love stories, especially with sad endings. Or maybe you write detective stories? Plenty action and people getting killed. You got to have a clever mind to think up those things. Is this the kind of mind you got, son? Just tell me: what kind of stories do you write?"

But Ralph has written neither stories nor poems nor novels. All he can put into words is a feeling that he should go to France and get some experience; and Mr. Feldman is doomed to the frustration of his cherished ideal of production. This is one form of the ancient, embarrassing, and futile conversation between father and son, which continues from the East Side to Park Avenue. The impasse persists, but money has intervened to dignify the father and subdue the son. In this story, the son even gets a lesson in sensibility from the philistine world of business. When Ralph complains that the buyer from Macy's bores him, Mr. Feldman reminds him that "she's a human being, like everyone else. Don't yawn at her; study her. Maybe you can write her up someday."

"Special Story" starts off on the same note of reluctant filial politeness, but a flow of warmth and security issues from the father's reminiscence about Willy Levy, the big-shot Jewish lawyer who was friendly with Al Capone and was considered the salt of the earth by President Warren Gamaliel Harding. At the end, there is a moment of identification between the two generations. Leisure and Yale cannot make the son intellectually sympathetic with the father, but they set the stage for a certain limited respect between them. Yaffe's book is full of flashes of admiration and affection among people who will never comprehend each other's motives. Wrangling and vexation do not evaporate at West End Avenue, but outright cleavage is harder to achieve in homes that have time and space to encourage the ritual of politeness. The very fact of wealth, of serene expectation that one's material hunger will be assuaged, seems to act as a psychic glue among

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kinsmen, and gives full formality to the concept of family. To a Jew without a bank account, relatives may crop up as dependents, bad habits, or enemies. But by the time his fortune is made, such accidental unions have undergone an efficient welding and organization: he is now a modest stockholder in a formidable corporate body. The family directs him, speaks for him, gives him status, and, finally, wields a metaphysical tyranny over him.

All the stories in *Poor Cousin Evelyn* have to do with some exercise of family tyranny—a daughter's personality effaced by her mother's strategic illnesses, a wife crumbled by threats of a practical joke, a mousy *nebichel* type overwhelmed by her rich sister's artichokes and a night at the opera. Every family produces natural oppressors and victims. For every husband with a fat cigar and a poker face, there is a wife who anxiously watches him swallow his mouthfuls. In the disingenuous title story, the man with the cigar, Uncle Hyman, is the mythical figure of success among his relations. A man of character, who has put someone out of business for belching during a speech he was making and stopped a check for Jewish orphans because he had not received an official acknowledgment of the contribution, this underwear tycoon is the guest without whom no festive dinner can begin. But into the subservient unity of his sisters-in-law and nephews there barges an outsider: coy, bright, Vassar-educated Cousin Evelyn who is determined to conquer the family and its despot. Cousin Evelyn, swinging between seduction and aggression, is crushed by the pendulum she delicately sets going to change the balance of power.

YAFFE deals very directly and unsentimentally with the triumphs and resentments that seethe in such bourgeois clans. He is not a subtle writer, but in his present context subtlety could not mean very much. The journey to Park Avenue was to some extent an education in imperviousness, the discarding of fine distinctions. What he does very accurately judge is the degree of personal force or weakness in his characters, the exact impact they make as individuals upon their social group; that is, what is a man's reputation in his club, what kind of name does he have in business, how important is his presence at a wedding.

Best of all, Yaffe has a sharp ear and a good memory for dialogue. We are so accustomed to acquainting ourselves with a culture through its

The biography of an extraordinary man

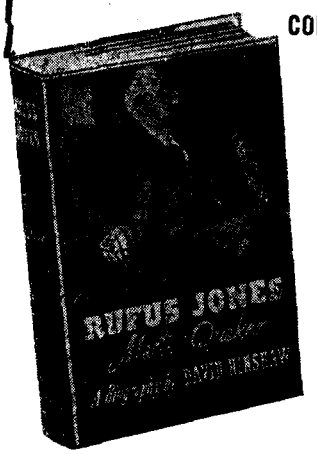
RUFUS JONES: Master Quaker

By David Hinshaw

■ Mr. Hinshaw tells movingly the story of Rufus Jones from its beginnings in the little town of South China, Maine, to the days of World War II when he attained a position of world-wide renown as chairman of the American Friends Service Committee. This organization, which was given the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947, was singularly successful in helping refugees and prisoners of war in Germany and Russia.

■ One of the most dramatic incidents described in the book is that in which Rufus Jones and two of his colleagues went to Berlin in November 1938 to personally ask permission of the German Gestapo to provide aid for the Nazi persecuted Jews.

■ "Jones's personality and work are made vivid, realistic, and of great dramatic interest . . . one of the outstanding biographies of our time."—John Haynes Holmes.



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art, its wars, and its implements, that we have lost the urge to discover its casual speech. These stories contain many characteristic ways of talking—the summer-colony newspaper speech of the narrator in "Poor Cousin Evelyn": "And in short, everyone pitched in to show a wonderful time to the girl who was going to be Harry's wife"; the professional cheeriness and reliable favorite phrases of the salesman in "When the Season Cometh Round": "We have a delightful day, am I right?"; the meandering, gratuitous apologies of an unimaginative artist in "A Question of Being Businesslike": "I believe in it, telling the truth—but when you're not eating so much, maybe some other things are finer. I mean it's not that I was being dishonest. Nothing like that. I mean—"

Sometimes, it is true, Yaffe sounds like a boy who feels very clever for remembering everything he overhears. You can also imagine him thinking rather stagily and statically, "What a scene this will make!" His main trouble is his uncertainty as to just what his stance should be as narrator of doings he is so familiar with. He has settled for a technical impressionism, leaving his material pretty much as he found it, and compromising his style between the speech of the college boy and that of the business-world cousins he meets at family gatherings. In a sense, he is fortunate, for he can and does borrow disinterestedness from his indeterminate position.

In "A Question of Being Businesslike," which should prove funny to anyone familiar with business tactics and a special kind of Jewish logic, Yaffe receives the full benefit of a point of view split several ways. An elderly Jewish American artist in Paris relates his bewildering experience with a wealthy West End Avenue businessman. No matter what sale price the artist set upon a certain painting, the businessman stolidly offered $50 less. The audience for this episode is a native French painter who can only marvel sardonically that anyone should pay such high prices for poor imitations of Degas. Yaffe, for his part, divides a casual sympathy among all three characters. He takes a good deal for granted, including his Jewish background, so that the quality of Jewishness goes both unburlesqued and undefended. It is a pleasure to read lifelike fragments of the speech of Americanized Jews, and to know that they are used not for humor or local color, and not self-consciously, but out of legitimate nostalgia and precise knowledge.

The Thrice Chosen

THE JEWS OF CHARLESTON. By CHARLES REZNIKOFF. With the collaboration of URIAH Z. ENGELMAN. Jewish Publication Society of America. 343 pp. $4.00.

Reviewed by EARL RAAB

ROOTLESSNESS was all right in its time, but men who fifteen years ago were fleeing from traditions are now hot in their pursuit. In this connection, Charleston offers a special historical dividend. To be not only Jew and American, but also Charlestonian, would seem to be thrice chosen.

More than any other city, not excepting Richmond, Charleston represents the antebellum South. It was the most influential Southern city during the decades preceding the "war between the states" and the last stronghold of the old planter aristocracy; it cultivated, along with azalea and jessamine, a conscious and deliberate brand of aristocratic thought; it cherished the notion of a ruling class and all the appurtenances thereof, including horsemanship and genealogy. According to an old quip: "Charlestonians are like the Chinese. They eat rice and worship their ancestors."

But tradition is not really identical with the superstructure of manners and mannerisms a society accumulates. Tradition is a historically matured sense of man's nature and responsibility. "The tradition of the elders," Hobhouse said, "is, as it were, the instinct of society." Allen Tate has said more simply that a traditional man knows what he is. An *intuitive* sense of honor among men: this was the heart of the old Southern tradition. The graces—good manner, benevolence, and dignity of conduct—were a logical consequence. Self-respect was a further consequence. If it was fiercely jealous of its aristocratic rights, this Old South was also conscious of its aristocratic obligations, and just because these lay outside the written law, they involved a rigid moral imperative.

This is the quality of the Old South that feeds the pastoral nostalgia of the Southern mind. The Faulknerian intellectual feels, with a good deal of reason, that money-morality, improvised ethics, and singing commercials are no less a Yankee invasion than were the armies of General Sherman. On the other hand, the Southern liberal would like to spike the Old South with a shot of even Older Jefferson:

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the American libertarian tradition, civil equality among men. In practice, the Old South has neither been conserved nor invigorated. Its trappings remain, but its heart and guts have gone out with the landed aristocracy. A disemboweled tradition dies lingeringly, but everywhere in the South it is dying, defeated by that same money-morality, improvised ethics, and singing commercials. The South, for better or worse—or both—becomes more a geographical expression and less a historical tradition, though Southern intellectuals are still asking: Should it be saved? Can it be saved?

American Jewry, and not only in the South, is asking itself similar questions concerning *its* heritage. What is being lost? What needs to be saved? What is irretrievably past? Community studies, made as they are in a variety of conditions, could provide the laboratory clues for an answer, especially in cities like Charleston, half a dozen generations removed from the ghetto.

Charles Reznikoff's book, while it provides the historical background for such an examination, skirts the examination itself. It would be rather arbitrary to quibble with the author's design since the book was written under circumscribed conditions for a circumscribed purpose. This year marks the community's two-hundredth anniversary, and this volume was prepared, under the aegis of a bicentennial committee, for the specific purpose of celebrating that anniversary. It is perhaps properly the burden of this book, then, to chronicle the Jewish past in Charleston.

At the beginning of the 19th century, Charleston had the largest Jewish community in the United States. In Charleston were made some of the earliest experiments in Jewish ritual reform. There are nationally famous Charlestonian names like Moses Lindo, Francis Salvador, Ludwig Lewisohn, and Bernard Baruch, and there are other Jewish names and family lines that extend estimably through the local history. All this is reported to an extent that should satisfy the bicentennial committee's purpose, be of particular interest to the Jews of Charleston, and of casual interest to others. But some will look in vain for light on such questions as: Is there a genuine survival of Jewish tradition in Charleston?

Mr. Reznikoff makes it sufficiently clear that so far as religion is concerned, it has followed in Charleston the inexorable American pattern: reform, conservative reaction, and no apostasy to speak of. But however much tradition may be a function of religion (especially for Jews), tradition is more than religion, has an existence of its own if it has an existence at all. The Jews of Charleston do not identify themselves in any "national" way with Israel or with Zionism, nor do they feel the intense single-group identity that pogrom, ghetto, or rabid bigotry imposes. In this situation, then, is there any identity as Jew, aside from more or less voluntary membership in a particular religious denomination?

ALBERT EINSTEIN has asserted that the "love of justice verging on fanaticism, and the quest for independence—these are the motivating traditions of the Jewish people which cause me to regard my adherence thereto as a gift of destiny. . . ." If from this point of view the dominant theme of the Jewish historical drama can be said to have been the sheer will to survive, the motif of Jewish tradition might well be called the ferocity of the free human will. As a concept this is in consonance with Jewish religious teachings, in which man is active in God's world—he "chooses the will of God." But, as unfolded in history, this "imperative of will" has come to have more than a religious connotation, has accreted to itself secular

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rhythms and ceremonies, and has embodied itself in secular institutions and personalities.

In the rather mysterious way that tradition operates for those who, by lineage, "stand in it" rather than merely adopt it as one may adopt a religion, the Jews as a historical group, like the citizens of the Old South, have had a special identity. As a historical group, they have had a heritage—and a responsibility. They have been in a position to "know what they are"—the one unbroken stitch through Western man's history. This continuity by will has had many meanings for mankind, of course, and has posed a continuous challenge for the Jew. (It also gives pertinence to Sartre's statement that the anti-Semite is one who "fears man's fate.")

But perhaps in middle-class America such a tradition of aggressive spirituality, for all its grandeur, no longer has any *raison d'être* and is dying a natural death, just as is the Southern tradition? That its lines are growing faint, it is impossible to deny, though it is also possible that the tradition survives in ways we are not yet prepared to recognize. If we are to dispel the current confusion about the nature of Jewish identity, we will have to investigate at the various community levels to see what actually is happening, both in fact and thought. The few casual remarks recorded by Mr. Reznikoff, of the order of "I was raised with a deep pride in my origin," are not enough.

That the atmosphere of the South is, at least rhetorically, kind to tradition in general, does not make the problem of Jewish identity any easier. It is true that anti-Semitism is not so virulent as Northerners expect it to be. In an Old South city like Charleston, as Mr. Reznikoff points out, there is a genuine climate of tolerance for Jews. In part, this is a result of the old and distinguished history of the local Jewish community. In part, it is the result of the fact that Jews are white-skinned and on the right side of at least one of the South's fences. There are, however, other fences. According to an old saying in the South: "There are two kinds of Charlestonians: those who don't wear shoes, and those who look at you as though you don't wear shoes." There has never been any serious question of the socially barefoot character of the Jews as a group, though many individuals have been "accepted." The Jews of Charleston, as Mr. Reznikoff points out, have a deep civic pride in their city and in its "antebellum beauty"; they are proud of the contributions the Jewish community has made to the development of the city. But their pride does not really extend to the old Southern tradition because they were always somewhat alien to it. At the same time, the self-definitions offered by European Jewish tradition have become more problematic with the years.

Ironically, it is in this absence of tradition, and in this nostalgia for it, that the Jew in the South is now most typically Southern. The will to self-definition remains—the categories no longer fit. The new South might be changing the picture both for Southern Jews and other Southerners; it is certainly worth investigating.

The God Within

ENTHUSIASM: A CHAPTER IN THE HISTORY OF RELIGION. By R. A. KNOX. Oxford University Press. 622 pp. $6.00.

Reviewed by WILL HERBERG

FOR thirty years, off and on, Monsignor Ronald Knox, distinguished Catholic chaplain at Oxford, has been working on a book telling the story of "enthusiastic" movements in Western Christendom. The result is this volume, long but never boring; urbane, entertaining, and informative.

Monsignor Knox tells his story episodically and the connective tissue of the historical filiation of movements is little explored. He begins with a brief reference to the strange doings in the early Christian church (see Paul's letters) and goes on to the Montanists and the Donatists, who insisted on prophecy and martyrdom in an age that had "outgrown" them. He next considers the various medieval heresies, primarily with the purpose of tracing the pre-Reformation roots of Anabaptism and other "enthusiastic" movements of Protestant times. But all this is merely by way of introduction. The bulk of the book is given over to the 17th and 18th centuries. Jansenism and Quietism in France, Quakerism and Methodism in England, are examined at some length and from many angles. A brief chapter on "Some Vagaries of Modern Revivalism" and another on "The Philosophy of Enthusiasm" complete the volume.

It is clear that the book was written as a work of love, and it can be read with pleasure, for it tells some strange and fascinating stories and tells them well. Father Knox knows how to make the escapades of a Molinos sound like a

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mystery tale (he has, in his "spare time," written several) and the marital adventures of a Wesley like a satirical memoir. Even the 17th-century disputes over grace and mystical doctrine—in their day, the preoccupation of court and salon as well as of the schools—become something lively, almost amusing, in his hands.

But how does this book rate as a serious study of "enthusiasm," of those religious movements and tendencies that again and again break through the bounds of tradition, authority, and custom to startle the world? Here one's judgment must be somewhat more reserved. For all its fullness of detail, the book is fragmentary. It tells stories, but it does not tell a story.

Father Knox makes no more than a perfunctory effort to relate the extravagances of "enthusiasm" to the normal life of the time. However queer the antics of the "enthusiasts" may appear to the sober, respectable churchgoer, it is amazing (as Father Knox himself notes) what a thin line often divides the "enthusiast's" theology from the orthodox faith of the age. Greater attention to social and cultural factors, and a more sustained effort to set the various "enthusiastic" movements in the context of the history of their time, would have immensely added to the significance of this study. Father Knox does sometimes allude to such factors—he notes, for example, that "it is neither among the richest nor among the poorest that enthusiasm recruits its most faithful converts; the lower-middle class . . . gives it the most promising welcome"—but he makes nothing of these insights. Indeed, only too frequently such comments merely convey his prejudices.

For despite first appearances, the prejudice is there, subtle, hard to pin down, yet, in a way, quite pervasive. Father Knox is a Catholic and one expects him to write as a Catholic. But a Catholic approach is one thing and Father Knox's *belittling* manner is another. Jansenism, a profoundly serious religious movement removed as far as possible from "enthusiasm," is dragged into the story by main force in order to subject it to a devaluating treatment from which it emerges as a rather miserable family affair of the Arnaulds, promoted mainly out of pride and egomania. Very much the same treatment, though without the bitterness, is given the Quakers and the Methodists. (Thirteenth-century Franciscanism and 17th-century Spanish mysticism are ignored by him, presumably because they happen to be approved by the church.) Father Knox's easy, good-natured, well-bred manner is admirably calculated to convey his wry distaste for the heretics and visionaries who disrupt the "ordinary decencies of ecclesiastical order." Pascal was "insincere"; Jonathan Edwards (mentioned in passing) was "flinty-minded"; John Wesley was "unashamedly a retailer [purveying] culture on reduced terms at secondhand"; George Fox's manners were "boorish" and his style "barbarous." And how those "enthusiasts" were dominated by women!

Father Knox makes an effort to interpret "enthusiasm" theologically, but the effort is not a particularly happy one. "Enthusiasm," he finds, is a kind of "ultra-supernaturalism," "basically . . . the revolt of Platonism against the Aristotelian *mise en scène* of traditional Christianity." This sweeping pronouncement fairly takes one's breath away. Aristotelianism, which as a philosophy has dominated the official Christian thinking of only a section of Christendom for hardly a third of Christian

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history, is confidently proclaimed to be the "*mise en scène* of traditional Christianity." And with equal assurance it is assumed that Aristotelianism and Platonism just about exhaust human thinking, so that if a man is not committed to one philosophy he must necessarily be committed to the other. But where does this bare dichotomy leave Pascal, Kierkegaard, Barth, or Niebuhr? Father Knox, like so many in the scholastic tradition, simply ignores the possibility of a third world outlook, of what might be called the Biblical-existential view, equally distinct from both Aristotelianism and Platonism.

The clue to the meaning of "enthusiasm," it seems to me, is given by the etymology of the word itself. An "enthusiast" is one who has a god within him, and this form of mystical self-deification is precisely what typical "enthusiasm" is, even though it does not characterize some of the movements which Father Knox, rather improperly, includes in his account. To claim to have God within is to ignore the radical discontinuity between God and man. In Biblical faith, the gulf is not to be bridged by man, but to bridge, to overleap, this gulf is precisely the purpose of the "enthusiast." "Enthusiasm," therefore, so far from being "ultra-supernaturalism," as Father Knox suggests, is actually a denial of the distinction between nature and God. Like mysticism, of which it is one aspect, "enthusiasm" is an assertion of the continuity between the natural and the supernatural orders. It is thus basically naturalistic. "Natural religion," G. Ernest Wright has acutely noted, "works itself out into philosophy or mysticism." In its essential meaning, "enthusiasm" is an attempt of the human spirit to reach out and encompass God. (This will be found to be as true of the Moslem, Jewish, and Eastern Orthodox "enthusiasm," which Father Knox does not mention, as of the Western Christian varieties he discusses.) It is one branch of an enterprise of which another is philosophy, Platonic and Aristotelian alike. Against both, against philosophy as well as against mysticism, there is a voice that says: "My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

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The Army Stereotype Again

FACE OF A HERO. By LOUIS FALSTEIN. Harcourt, Brace. 312 pp. $3.00.

Reviewed by NATHAN HALPER

ONE day, the first sergeant came out to watch us on the drill field. We were green. Being green, we were mortally afraid of non-coms. Especially of top kicks. This one was tall, bony, with leathery face, bull-frog voice, and a large wad of tobacco working like a nervous tic in the middle of his cheek.

When it came to doing push-ups, many of us fell on our face. The sergeant stared at us with a succulent unbelief. "Jeez!" he said. "What in hell is the matter wi' you young guys? It's no trouble. I can do it. An' I was forty-three yesterday." Whereupon, all the men, two hundred and sixty men, sang "Happy Birthday to You."

Happy birthday, dear sergeant,
Happy birthday to you.

This is something I remember every time I read a war book. It's a side of army life which our writers won't discuss.

Writers did not like the army. They knew they shouldn't and they wouldn't before they even entered it. In a sense, their books were written before they ever were experienced. The time spent in the service only added local color.

Their ideas of what would happen, though they were far from being accurate, did contain a core of truth. The army had a lot of evils. The writer put them in his book. But, because of his preconceptions, the writer also managed to see many ills that were not there. He put these in his novel too. Nor was he at all restricted to things which he thought he had seen. Any rumor or surmise, just as long as it was hostile, had in it the ring of fact. It went into his novel too. If, after all this, he still had a memory of something that was pleasant, he knew it was proper to delete it.

Of a thousand meals a year, surely one or

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two were edible. Of a thousand mess halls, surely one or two were adequate. But, since it is dogma that the army food was bad, no soldier in a war book ever is allowed to get a single decent cup of coffee.

Give the author a kleptomaniac, a dope fiend, or a rapist. Or give him the poor fellow who murdered the children in Düsseldorf. He will drench them with compassion. He will show they're not to blame. They are products of heredity, of environment, of these awful times we live in. Give the writer a lieutenant. He will show you an obscenity without the ghost of a redeeming trait.

The GI's, on the other hand, are the writer's fellow victims. As such, they get his sympathy. But they also are a part of the writer's army experience. As such—he views them with distaste. They're the people: little people. In a way, they are fine. Certainly, as opposed to the officers. At the same time, he himself is a sensitive, intellectual, and idealistic liberal. And, compared to that, they have such narrow minds, small perspectives, mean horizons.

Put him in the heart of China. He'll respect their local customs. Give him a tribe of Solomon Islanders. He will try to feel at home.

Give him sailors, loggers, riveters; give him a couple of truck drivers; a few Cape Cod fishermen. He will turn a double cart-wheel because they are so Rabelaisian. However, once these men put on an army uniform, their swearing, drinking, wenching, suddenly become the marks of a tawdry poverty of spirit.

In his scenes of combat, he will show you farmers tilling while the tanks lunge through the furrows. He will show you the civilians while the bombs fall over London. He will show you refugees caught between two hostile armies. Fire, blood, famine, fever—nothing has the strength to faze them. The people are indestructible.

Put these people in the army. They immediately lose their fiber. In a book like Louis Falstein's, the majority of the soldiers are merely hysterical pushovers.

In his novel, he describes life in a bomber. Ben Isaacs, the narrator, is a fellow like the author. The members of the crew are the traditional samples of heterogeneous men coming from every section of the country. It begins with their first mission. It ends with Sergeant Isaacs after he completes his fiftieth. In between, his colleagues suffer a wide assortment of disasters, both physical and psychological.

The life in a heavy bomber was not any kind of joy ride. Falstein proves it. *Over*-proves it. He has one man blow his brains out. A second uses his parachute before he even reaches the target. A third one gets obsessive guilt. Something striking happens to every character.

I am sure these happened somewhere. He puts them in a single plane. It is like the Grand Guignol. Once you get the idea, you sit and wait for Tut's curse to strike the next one.

It's the same, same old book. This is strange. For the writer, Louis Falstein, isn't at all the usual writer.

He has neither gall nor guile. He is gentle and judicious. The sort of a scholarly fellow who engages in meditation as he fingers his machine gun while they zoom above Ploesti.

But, instead of writing the book that he might have written, he has taken as his model the clichés of his predecessors. We still get a sense of a fair and thoughtful man. But this merely serves to add a rather incongruous touch to the immoderate proceedings.

Though he follows the precedent of using the Jewish soldier as his chief victim-spokesman, one stereotype which Falstein forgoes is that of using anti-Semitism as the chief symbol and vehicle for the GI's resentment at his fate. He does not close his eyes to it. But when he shows its presence, he does so without that querulous hypersensitivity which we find in so many war books. For this we can be grateful.

BOOK REVIEWERS IN THIS ISSUE

ALLEN MANDELBAUM has a Rockefeller Foundation fellowship in humanities.

ISA KAPP contributes reviews frequently to this magazine.

EARL RAAB wrote "There's No City Like San Francisco" in the October 1950 issue.

WILL HERBERG's book on Jewish theology will be published this spring by the Jewish Publication Society of America.

NATHAN HALPER has written criticism for various magazines, and is an authority on the writings of James Joyce.

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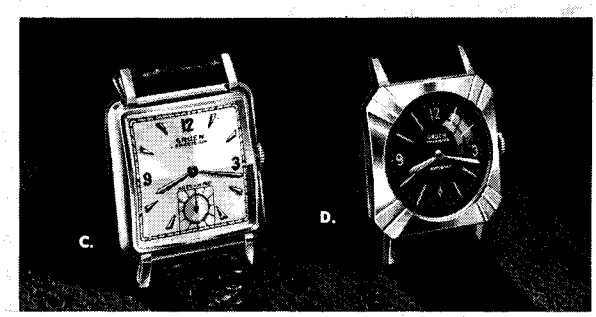

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